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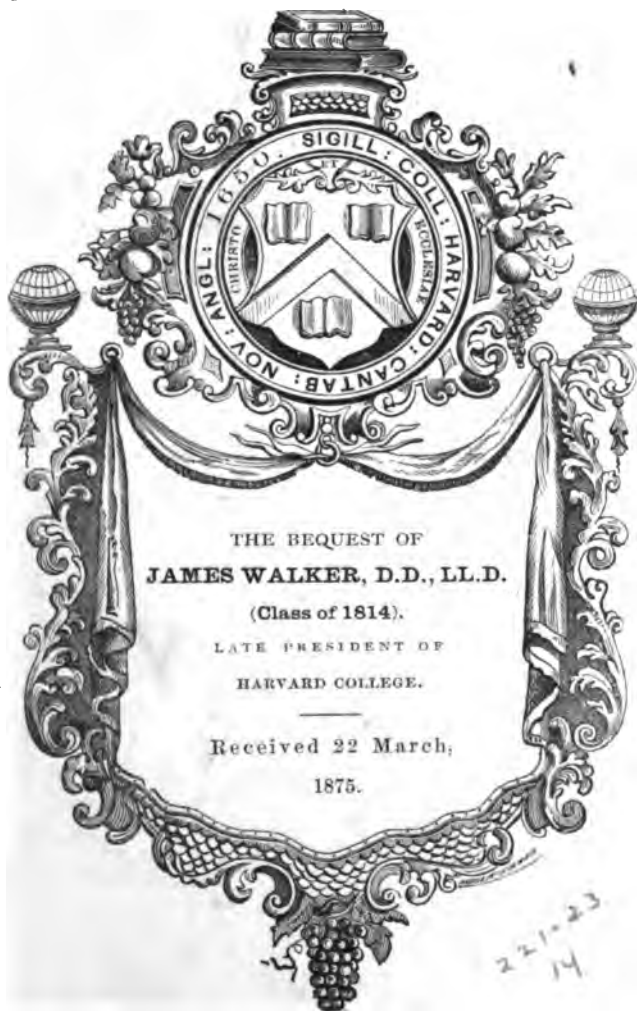
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THE
HISTORY
OF
PHILOSOPHY,

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES
TO THE BEGINNING OF THE PRESENT CENTURY:

DRAWN UP FROM
Brucker's Historia Critica Philosophiæ.

BY WILLIAM ENFIELD, LL.D.

Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat. CICERO.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
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1875, March 22.
Request of
James Walker, D.D., LL.D.
(H. U. 1814.)
President of Harv. Univ.

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BOOK III.

OF THE

PHILOSOPHY OF THE ROMANS.

CHAP. I.

OF THE STATE OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE
ROMAN REPUBLIC.

IN relating the History of Philosophy during **THE FIRST PERIOD**, we have traced its rise and progress, in every age and country in which it has appeared, from the earliest times to the æra of the establishment of the schools of Alexandria. **THE SECOND PERIOD**, on which we are now entering, will comprehend the whole series of philosophical history, from the æra just mentioned to the revival of letters; and will exhibit the forms, under which philosophy successively appeared, among the Romans; among the Eastern Nations, particularly the Jews and Saracens; and among the Christians.

The history of philosophy among the Romans, in the infancy of their state, has been already briefly considered, under the general head of Barbaric Philosophy; and we have little to add to what has been related respecting this epocha: for, from the building of Rome, through the whole period of the regal government, and many years after the consular power was established, the Romans discovered little inclination to cultivate any other kind of knowledge, than that which was barely necessary for the ordinary purposes of life, and for their military operations. The rise of philosophy at Rome may be dated from the time of the embassy, which was sent from the Athenians to the Romans, deprecating a fine of five hundred talents, which had been inflicted upon them for laying waste Oropii, a town of Sicynia. The exact time of this embassy, which has been already mentioned, is unknown, but it is probable that it happened about the 156th Olympiad, or towards the close

of the sixth century from the building of Rome, that is 156 years before Christ.¹

The immediate effect of the display which these philosophical missionaries * made of their wisdom and eloquence was, to excite in the Roman youth of all ranks an ardent thirst after knowledge. Lelius, Furius and Scipio, young men of the first distinction and highest expectations, discovered an earnest desire to enlist themselves under the banners of philosophy; and much was to be hoped for from their future patronage, when they should occupy important offices in the state. But *Cato* the Censor, whose inflexible virtue gave him an oracular authority among his countrymen, disapproved this sudden innovation in public manners; and philosophy was sternly dismissed.² Not that *Cato* was himself illiterate, or wholly untinctured with philosophy; for he wrote a celebrated treatise upon agriculture. When he was a young man, in the service of *Fabius Maximus*, at the taking of *Tarentum*, he is said to have conversed with *Nearchus*, one of the disciples of *Pythagoras*; ³ and, at an advanced age, whilst he was prætor in *Sardinia*, he was instructed in the Greek language by *Eanius*.⁴ But he was apprehensive, that the introduction of philosophical studies into Rome would effeminate the spirit of its young men, and enfeeble those hardy virtues which were the foundation of their national glory.

By this visit of the Grecian philosophers a spirit of inquiry was, however, raised among the Roman youth, which the injudicious caution of *Cato* could not suppress. The struggle between philosophy and voluntary ignorance was, indeed, for some time maintained; for we read, that, in the consulship of *Strabo* and *Valerius*, a decree of the senate passed, probably in consequence of repeated visits from Grecian philosophers, requiring the prætor *Pomponius* to take care, that no philosophers were resident in Rome.⁵

¹ Cic. *Ac. Qu.* l. iv. c. 45. *Plut. in Caton. maj.* *Cic. de Senectute*, c. 5. *Aul. Gell.* l. xv. c. 11. *Cic. Tusc. Qu.* l. iv. c. 2.

* *Carneades*, *Diogenes*, and *Critolaus*: see vol. i. c. viii. §. 2.

² *Plut.* l. c.

³ *ib.*

⁴ *Cic. Cato maj.* c. 1. 8. *Lucullus*, c. 2. *Quintil.* l. xii. c. 11. *Aurel. Vict. de Vir. illust.* c. 47.

⁵ *Aul. Gell.* l. xv. c. 11. *Suet. de Rhet.* c. 1. *Plin. Nat. Hist.* l. xxix. c. 1, *Conf. Bayle*, *P. Cato*.

Some years afterwards, the censors, as if resolved at once to shut the door against philosophy and eloquence, issued a similar edict against rhetoricians, in terms to this effect:—"Whereas we have been informed, that certain men, who call themselves Latin rhetoricians, had instituted a new kind of learning, and opened schools, in which young men trifle away their time day after day, we, judging this innovation to be inconsistent with the purpose for which our ancestors established schools, contrary to ancient custom, and injurious to our youth, do hereby warn both those who keep these schools, and those who frequent them, that they are herein acting contrary to our pleasure."⁶ And this edict was afterwards revived, in the year of Rome 662,⁷ under the consulate of Pulcher and Perpenna. But at length philosophy, under the protection of those great commanders who had conquered Greece, prevailed; and Rome opened her gates to all who professed to be teachers of wisdom and eloquence.

Scipio Africanus was one of the first among the Roman youths of patrician rank, who, in the midst of military glory, found leisure to listen to the precepts of philosophy. Whatever time he could spare from military operations, he devoted to study: his companions were Polybius, Panætius, and other men of letters;⁸ and he was intimately conversant with the best Greek writers, particularly Xenophon. Panætius was perfectly qualified to assist his illustrious pupil in acquiring a general ~~knowing~~ ^{knowledge} of philosophy; for though himself a Stoic, he held the writings of Plato in high estimation, and was thoroughly acquainted with the systems of other philosophers. And the exalted character of *Scipio* leaves no room to doubt, that he imbibed from his preceptors the wisdom, without suffering himself to be tinctured with the extravagancies of stoicism. *Lælius* and *Furius* were also great admirers of Greek learning.⁹ The former, whilst he was young, attended the lectures of Diogenes the Stoic, and afterwards those of Panætius. The circumstance chiefly worthy of admiration in these great men is that, although they did not join themselves to the band of phi-

⁶ A. Gell. & Suet. l. c.⁷ B. C. 91.⁸ Velleius Paterculus l. i. c. 13. 17. 18. Cic. de Fin. l. iv. c. 9. Tusc. Qu. l. i. c. 38. l. ii. Orat. pro Muræna.⁹ De Orat. l. ii. De Fin. l. ii.

losophers, but sought for glory in the offices of civil or military life, they made use of lessons of philosophy in acquiring the most exalted merit; so that, as Cicero relates,¹⁰ by the happy union of natural dispositions, the most excellent and noble, with habits formed by diligent cultivation, these three illustrious men attained a degree of perfection in moderation, sobriety, and every other virtue scarcely to be paralleled.

Animated by such examples, many other persons of eminence in Rome attached themselves to the study of philosophy, particularly among those who were devoted to the profession of the law. *Quintius Tubero*,¹¹ a nephew of Scipio Africanus, who was at this time one of the most celebrated masters of civil law, was also conversant with philosophical learning, and professed himself a follower of the Stoic sect. The moral doctrine of this sect was peculiarly suitable to his natural temper, and to the habits of temperance and moderation which he had learned from his father, one of those excellent Romans, who, in the highest offices of the state, retained the simplicity of rustic manners. Confirmed in these habits by the precepts of Panætius, when Tubero was called upon, as prætor, to give a public entertainment in honour of his uncle,¹² he provided only wooden couches covered with goat-skins, earthen vessels, and a frugal repast. The people, who expected a splendid feast, were dissatisfied, and dismissed him from his office: but the action reflected no discredit either upon the lawyer or the philosopher; for it was, as Seneca remarks,¹³ an instructive lesson of moderation to the Romans, who, when they saw the sacred tables of Jupiter served with earthen vessels, would learn that men ought to be contented with such things as the gods themselves did not disdain to use. Panætius dedicated to his pupil a treatise upon patience, and advised him to commit to memory the discourses of the academic Crates concerning grief;¹⁴ whence it appears, that Tubero studied the Stoic philosophy chiefly with a view to the conduct of life.

¹⁰ Orat. pro Archia.

¹¹ Pro Muræna. Tacit. Ann. l. xvi. A. Gell. l. xv.

¹² Senec. Ep. 95. Val. Max. l. vii. c. 5. l. iv. c. 4. Cic. pro Mur.

¹³ Ep. 96. 99.

¹⁴ Cic. de Off. l. iii. Fragm. Tober. Fabric. Bib. Lat. t. i. p. 628.

Lucullus was at this time an active patron of philosophy. Whilst he was quæstor in Macedonia, and afterwards, when he had the conduct of the Mithridatic war, he had frequent opportunities of conversing with Grecian philosophers, and acquired such a relish for philosophical studies, that, as Cicero relates, he devoted to them all the leisure he could command¹⁵. His constant companion was Antiochus, the Ascalonite, who was universally esteemed a man of genius and learning. This philosopher, though a pupil of Philo, who, after Carneades, supported the doctrine of the Middle Academy, was a zealous advocate for the system of the Old Academy, and was often called upon by Lucullus, who himself favoured that system, to argue in the private disputations which were carried on at his house, against the patrons of the Middle Academy, among whom was Cicero. This is the reason why Cicero, in the fourth book of his *Academic Questions*, assigns to Lucullus the office of defending the Old Academy.

In order to promote a general taste for learning and philosophy, Lucullus made a large collection of valuable books, and erected a library, with galleries and schools adjoining, to which he invited learned men of all descriptions, and which, particularly, afforded a welcome retreat to those Greeks, who, at this time, sought in Rome an asylum from the tumults of war.¹⁶ This place became the daily resort of men of letters, where every one enjoyed the benefit of reading or conversation, as best suited to his taste. Lucullus himself frequently appeared among his friends (for by this noble act of public munificence, he had made all the lovers of science and literature his friends), and conversed with them in a manner which shewed him to be, not only a patron of philosophers, but himself a philosopher. Others were stimulated, by this example, to afford countenance and protection, in similar ways, to learning of every kind; so that this period may be considered as the first age of philosophy in Rome.

The Greek philosophy having been thus transplanted to Rome, the exotic plant flourished with vigour in its new soil. Partly through the instructions of those Grecian phi-

¹⁵ Acad. Quæst. l. iv. c. 4. Plut. Lucull.

¹⁶ Plut. l. c. et Vit. Ciceronis. Cic. in Lucull. Ac. Qu. l. iv. Epist. ad Fam. ix. Ep. 8. l. xiii. Ep. 1.

philosophers who resided in Rome, and partly by means of the practice, which was now commonly adopted, of sending young men from Rome to the ancient schools of wisdom for education, science and learning made a rapid progress, and almost every sect of philosophy found followers and patrons among the higher orders of the Roman citizens. If, however, we apply the term philosopher to those who speculated in Rome, it must be in a sense somewhat different from that in which we have hitherto used it with respect to the Greeks. Among them we have seen, that a philosopher was one, who professionally employed his time in studying and teaching philosophy; and several of these, about the time of which we are now treating, became resident, in this capacity, at Rome. But, among the Romans themselves, there were scarcely any who were philosophers by profession. They who are spoken of under this denomination, were, for the most part, men of high rank, invested with civil or military offices, and occupied in public affairs. They studied philosophy, as they cultivated other liberal arts, rather as a means of acquiring ability, and obtaining distinction, in their civil capacities, or as an elegant amusement in their intervals of leisure, than as in itself an object of attention.

This circumstance will serve to account for a fact, which, at first view, may seem surprising; that, notwithstanding the high spirit of the Roman people, they chose rather to pay homage to a conquered nation, by adopting the dogmas of their sects, than to attempt, from their own stores, to form for themselves a new system of philosophy. They did not want ability for undertakings of this nature, but they wanted leisure. They wished to enjoy the reputation and the benefit of wisdom; and therefore studied philosophy under such masters as accident cast in their way, or their particular profession and turn of mind led them to prefer. Thus the Stoic philosophy was, on account of the utility of its moral doctrine, peculiarly adapted to the character and office of lawyers and magistrates; the Pythagoric and Platonic suited the taste of the gloomy and contemplative; and the Epicurean was welcome to those selfish spirits, who were disposed to prefer ignoble sloth to public virtue. Every one found, in the doctrines of some one of the Grecian sects, tenets which suited his own dis-

position and situation; and therefore no one thought it necessary to attempt farther discoveries or improvements in philosophy. Perhaps, too, it may be added, that the Romans looked up to the schools of Greece with a degree of respect, which would not suffer them to undertake any thing new, in a walk in which so many eminent men had exerted their talents. Despairing of doing more than had been already done by the illustrious founders of the several sects of philosophy, they thought it sufficient to make choice of some one of these as their guide. Hence Greece, which had submitted to the arms, in her turn subdued the understandings of the Romans; and, contrary to that which in these cases commonly happens, the conquerors adopted the opinions and manners of the conquered.

The ancient *Italic*, or *Pythagorean* school, does not appear to have extended beyond that part of Italy formerly called *Magna Græcia*. And though afterwards the fame of this singular sect, and of the marvellous actions, and mysterious doctrines of its founder, reached the Romans,¹⁷ and excited some degree of superstitious veneration among an ignorant people, it does not appear that Pythagoras had any followers in Rome before the seventh century from the building of the city, unless the poet Ennius be reckoned such, concerning whom Persius intimates, that he adopted the Pythagorean doctrine of *Metempsychosis*, and supposed the soul of Homer to have passed, after several migrations, into his body

Conjunct hoc Enni, postquam destertuit eas
Mæonides Quintus pavone ex Pythagoreo.^{18*}

Publius Nigidius, surnamed *Figulus*, who was a contemporary and friend of Cicero, was a professed advocate for the doctrine of Pythagoras. Cicero¹⁹ speaks of him as an accurate and penetrating inquirer into nature, and ascribes to him the revival of that philosophy, which formerly, for

¹⁷ Liv. l. 1. c. 8. Plin. Hist. N. l. xxxiv. c. 6.

¹⁸ Sat. vi. v. 10.

... In Ennius' deathless strains,

Strains, in the mould of sober reason cast,

... When all his transmigrating dreams were past.

BREWSTER.

* De Universitate, c. 1.

several ages, flourished in the Pythagorean schools, both in Italy and Sicily. He was a considerable proficient in mathematical and astronomical learning, and, after the example of his master, applied his knowledge of nature to the purposes of imposture.²⁰ He held frequent disputations with Cicero and his friends on philosophical questions. In civil affairs he attached himself to the party of Pompey; and, upon Cæsar's accession to the supreme power, he was banished from Rome.²¹ After his time, the Pythagorean doctrine was much neglected; few persons being now able to decipher, with accuracy, the obscure dogmas of this mysterious sect.²²

The philosophy of the *Old Academy*, as it was revived and corrected by Antiochus, found many advocates at Rome. Among these, besides Lucullus, was the illustrious defender of Roman liberty, *Marcus Brutus*. Plutarch says of him,²³ that there was no Greek philosopher, on whom he did not attend, nor any sect with whose tenets he was not conversant, but that he, for the most part, embraced the doctrine of Plato, and followed the Old rather than the New or Middle Academy; and, on this account, was a great admirer of Antiochus the Ascalonite, and admitted his brother Aristo into his confidence. Cicero relates the same, and adds,²⁴ that "Brutus, excelling in every kind of merit, so successfully transplanted the Greek philosophy into the Latin tongue, as to render it almost unnecessary to have recourse to the original, in order to gain a competent knowledge of the subject." Notwithstanding his civil and military engagements, he wrote treatises on *Virtue*, on *Patience*, and on the *Offices of Life*; which, though in point of style concise even to abruptness, contained an excellent summary of ethics, framed partly from the doctrines of Plato, and partly from those of the stoical school:²⁵

²⁰ Apul. Apol. A. Gell. l. x. c. 11. l. xi. c. 11. l. vi. 14. Dio, l. xlv. p. 306. Suet. in Aug. c. 94. Lucan. Phars. l. i. v. 639, &c. Macrobi. Sat. l. vi. c. 8. l. ii. c. 12.

²¹ Dio et Suet. l. c. A. Gell. l. xi. c. 11. Plut. in Ciceron. Cic. l. c. et Fam. Ep. l. iv. ep. 31. Euseb. Chron. 183. 4.

²² Val. Max. l. iv. c. 3.

²³ In Brut. t. v. p. 688, &c.

²⁴ In Bruto, c. ult. Ac. Q. l. i. c. 3.

²⁵ Plut. l. c. Cic. Ep. Fam. l. ix. ep. 15. Ad Attic. l. xii. ep. 46. Dialog. de Caus. corr. eloq. Tusc. Q. l. v. c. 1. De Fin. l. 1. c. 3. Sen. Cons. ad. Helv. c. 9.

for Brutus, after his master Antiochus, was disposed to favour the union of these two sects.

It reflects immortal honour upon the memory of Brutus, that he was a philosopher in actions as well as in words. His gentle manners, his noble mind, his entire self-command, and his inflexible integrity, rendered him beloved by his friends, and admired by the multitude, and would not suffer even his enemies to hate or despise him. If it be thought, that he tarnished the lustre of his merit by lifting up his hand against Cæsar, it should be remembered, that in the soul of a Roman, whilst Roman virtue remained, every private passion was lost in the love of his country. The ardour of his patriotic spirit would not suffer him to survive that public liberty which he could no longer preserve; and, after the example of his uncle Cato, he fell by his own hand: an action, which, though nothing can justify, such a situation may be allowed in some measure to excuse.²⁶

Another ornament of the Old Academy was *M. Terentius Varro*, who was borne at Rome in the 638th²⁷ year of the city. Cicero, in a letter in which he recommends him as a quæstor to Brutus,²⁸ assures the commander, that he would find him perfectly qualified for the post, and particularly insists upon his good sense, his indifference to pleasure, and his patient perseverance in business. To these virtues he added uncommon abilities, and large stores of knowledge, which qualified him for the highest offices of the state. He attached himself to the party of Pompey, and in the time of the triumvirate was proscribed with Cicero: and, though he escaped with his life, he suffered the loss of his library, and of his own writings; a loss, which would be severely felt by one who had devoted a great part of his life to letters.²⁹ Returning, at length, to Rome, he spent his last years in literary leisure. He died in the 727th year of the city. His prose writings were exceedingly numerous, and treated of various topics in antiquities, chronology, geography, natural and civil history, philosophy and criticism. He was, besides, a poet of some distinction, and wrote in almost

²⁶ Plut. l. c. p. 706. Florus, l. iv. c. 7. Dio, lib. 47.

²⁷ B. C. 115.

²⁸ Ep. Fam. l. xii. ep. 10.

²⁹ A. Gell. l. iii. c. 10. Plin. N. Hist. l. xxix. c. 4. Sen. ad Helv. c. 8. Arnob. adv. Gent. l. v. p. 158. Aug. de Civ. D. l. iv. c. 1. l. vi. c. 2. l. xii. c. 4. l. xix. c. 1. Quint. Inst. l. x. c. 1. Lact. l. i. c. 6.

every kind of verse. His piece *De re rustica*, "On Agriculture," and a few fragments, are all that is extant of his works.³⁰

To Varro we may add *M. Piso*, whom Cicero introduces as maintaining at large the opinion of the Old Academy concerning moral ends, not, however, without a mixture of the Peripatetic doctrine, which he had learned at Athens from Staseas, a Peripatetic preceptor.³¹

The *Middle Academy*, no less than the Old, had its patrons at Rome. A small degree of attention to the state of philosophy at this time will be sufficient to discover the cause. The systems of the dogmatic philosophers lay open to so many objections, and in many particulars rested upon so precarious a foundation, as to afford great encouragement to scepticism. Many wise men, when they observed the contradictory opinions which were advanced by different sects, and the plausible arguments by which opposite doctrines were supported, were inclined to look upon truth as a treasure, which lies too deep to be fathomed by the line of the human understanding, and contented themselves, with such probable conclusions, as were sufficient for the practical purposes of life. The *Middle Academy*, therefore, which was founded upon a conviction of the imbecility of human reason, without running, with the *Pyrrhonists*, into the extravagance of an entire suspension of opinion, became a favourite sect among the Romans. It was peculiarly suited to the character of a public pleader, as it left the field of disputation perfectly free, and would inure him to the practice of collecting arguments from all quarters, on opposite sides of every doubtful question. Hence it was that Cicero, under the instruction of Philo, addicted himself to this sect, and without difficulty persuaded others to follow his example. This illustrious Roman, who eclipsed all his contemporaries in eloquence, has also acquired no small share of reputation as a philosopher.³² It will, therefore, be necessary that we enter

³⁰ Cic. Ac. Q. l. i. c. 2, 3. Quint. l. i. c. 4. Fabric. Bib. Lat. t. i. l. 1. c. 7. p. 76.

³¹ Cic. de Fin. l. v. c. 1.

³² Conf. Lact. l. i. c. 15. iii. 14. Quint. l. x. c. 1. Macrob. in Somn. Scip. l. i. c. 17. 27. Plut. in Cicero. t. vi. p. 55. Erasm. ep. l. xxvii. ep. 1. l. ii. ep. 28. Horn. Hist. Phil. l. iv. c. 5. Morhoff. Polyh. t. i. l. iv. c. 11. § 7. Fab. Bib. Lat. t. ii. p. 165.

into the particulars of his life, so far as may enable us to form a judgment concerning his real merit in this capacity.

Marcus Tullius Cicero was born at Arpinum, in the 647thth year of the city.³⁴ During his childhood he distinguished himself in literary contests with his companions, and studied under several masters, among whom he particularly mentions Plotius, a Greek preceptor, Phaedrus, an Epicurean philosopher, and Archias, the poet. He made several juvenile attempts in poetry; but, if we may judge from the few fragments of his verses which remain, with no great degree of success. After he had finished his puerile studies, he applied his mature judgment to philosophy under Philo of Larissa; a philosopher, who was held in the highest esteem among the Romans, both for his learning and manners. From the same preceptor he also received instruction in rhetoric; for, from the first, Cicero made philosophy subservient to eloquence.³⁵

In the eighteenth year of his age, Cicero studied law under the direction of Mucius Scaevola, an eminent lawyer, to whom he was introduced by his father, when he put on the woollen dress, with this advice, never to lose an opportunity of conversing with that wise and excellent man.³⁶ After a short interval, in which he engaged in military expeditions, first under Sylla, then under Pompey, he returned with great impatience to his studies.³⁷ At this time he put himself under the constant tuition of Diodotus, a Stoic, chiefly for the sake of exercising himself in dialectics, which the Stoics considered as a restricted kind of eloquence, but not without an assiduous attention to many other branches of study, in which this learned philosopher was well qualified to instruct him. About the age of twenty years, he translated into the Latin tongue Xenophon's *Œconomics*, and several books of Plato. A specimen of

³⁴ B. C. 106.

³⁵ A. Gell. l. xv. c. 28. Cic. in Brut. et Ep. ad Fam. l. vii. 5. l. xiii. 41.

³⁶ Plut. in Cic. Sueton. de Clar. Rhet. c. 2. Cic. Orat. pro Archia. c. 1. De Orat. l. iii. c. 28. Tusc. Q. l. ii. c. 2. Voss. de Poet. Lat. p. 16. Fabr. B. Lat. t. 1. p. 129.

³⁷ Cic. de Amic. c. 1. Plut. l. c.

³⁸ Ib. et Cic. Philipp. xii. 11.

his version of the *Timæus* of Plato is preserved in his works.³⁸

Having thus prepared himself for his profession by indefatigable study, Cicero made his first appearance in public at twenty-six years of age, and pleaded in defence of Roscius against the accusation of Sylla. Soon afterwards, under the plea of recruiting his strength, which he had impaired by the violence of his oratorical exertions, but perhaps chiefly through fear of Sylla, whom he had opposed, he withdrew to Athens. Here he attended upon Antiochus the Ascalonite; but, not approving his doctrine, which differed from that of the Middle Academy, he became a hearer of Posidonius the Rhodian. By frequenting the schools of these and other preceptors, he acquired such a love of philosophy, that after his return to Rome, amidst the business of the forum and the senate, he always found leisure for the speculations of the schools. Upon his second appearance in public, he met with some discouragement from a prevalent opinion, that he was better qualified for the study of philosophy than for the business of active life. But his superior powers of eloquence, soon subdued every prejudice against him, and raised him to the highest distinction among his fellow citizens. In the successive offices of quæstor, ædile, and prætor, he acquitted himself with great reputation. In the consulate he obtained immortal honour by his bold and successful opposition to the machinations of Cataline and his party, and received the glorious title of the Father of his Country.³⁹

The popularity which Cicero had acquired during his consulship, exposed him to the envy of his rivals. Soon afterwards, his unsuccessful attempt to bring Clodius to public justice brought upon him the resentment of that daring and seditious profligate; and, notwithstanding all the efforts of the senate to protect him, the affair terminated in his banishment from Rome.⁴⁰ Leaving Italy, he passed over into Greece, and visited his friend Plancius at Thessalonica, who afforded him a hospitable asylum. All good men la-

³⁸ In Brut. c. 90. Ep. ad. Fam. l. xiii. ep. 16. et in Lucullo. De Off. l. ii. c. 24. Quint. l. i. c. 2. l. iii. c. 1. Hieron. Pref. in Euseb. Chron.

³⁹ Orat. pro Roscio. Aul. Gell. l. xv. c. 28. Quint. l. xii. c. 6. Plut. l. c. Cic. in Brut. c. 91. Orat. pro Planc. in Pis. pro Sext. in Catal.

⁴⁰ Dio. l. xxxviii. Velleius P. l. ii.

mented his disgrace; and many Grecians vied with each other in offering him tokens of respect. But nothing could alleviate the dejection which he suffered, whilst he lay under a sentence of banishment from the country, which had been the seat of all his former honours. He remained inconsolable, till, after an interval of sixteen months, the Clodian party was suppressed by Pompey, and, by the unanimous voice of the senate and people, he was recalled.⁴¹

In Cicero's subsequent quæstorship in Cilicia, his conduct was highly meritorious; for he exercised his authority with exemplary mildness and integrity, and, in the midst of war, cultivated the arts of peace. On his return, he called at Rhodes, and made a short stay at Athens; where he had the satisfaction of revisiting the places in which his youthful feet had wandered in search of wisdom, and of conversing with many of his former preceptors and friends.⁴²

When the flames of civil dissention between Pompey and Cæsar began to burst forth, Cicero used his utmost influence with each party to bring them to terms of accommodation.⁴³ Finding every attempt of this kind unsuccessful, he long remained in anxious deliberation, whether he should follow Pompey in a glorious and honourable, but ruined cause; or should consult his own safety, and that of his friends, by following the rising fortunes of Cæsar. Had the latter preponderated, he would have listened to the counsel of Cæsar, who advised him, if on account of his advancing years he were averse to military life, to retire into some remote part of Greece, and pass the remainder of his days in tranquillity. But he could not persuade himself to desert the ancient constitution of his country, which he had hitherto honestly defended, and, therefore, determined to join the party of Pompey. Afterwards, however, when he found that Pompey slighted his friendship, he repented of his resolution; and, after the memorable battle of Pharsalia, instead of accepting the charge of the armament which lay at Dyrrachium, as Cato advised, he met Cæsar on his return from Asia, and accepted his friendship.⁴⁴

From this time, Cicero, no longer able to serve his coun-

Plut. l. c. Cic. Orat. pro domo sua.

⁴¹ Plut. l. c.

⁴² Ep. Fam. l. vi. ep. 6. l. vii. ep. 3. l. xiii. ep. 11.

⁴³ Plut. l. c.

try in the manner he wished, retired from public affairs, resolving to devote himself wholly to the study of philosophy. He employed the unwelcome leisure, which the ruin of the republic afforded him, in reading or writing; and he found more satisfaction in conversing with the dead in his valuable library, at Tusculum, than in visiting Rome to pay homage to Caesar. His tranquillity was, however, soon interrupted by domestic vexations and afflictions. From causes which are not fully explained, he divorced his wife Terentia; and his daughter Tullia, who was married to Lentulus, died in child-bed.⁴⁵

Soon after the death of Caesar, although it does not appear that Cicero had any concern in the conspiracy, he fell a sacrifice to the resentment of Antony, who could not forget the severe Philippics which the orator had delivered against him. When the triumvirate was formed, and it was reciprocally agreed that some of the enemies of each party should be given up, Antony demanded the head of Cicero. Accordingly, after much contention, and on the part of Octavius, a delay of three days, Cicero was registered among the hundred and thirty senators who were doomed to destruction by this sanguinary proscription. Apprized by his friends of his danger, he fled from place to place for safety; always thinking, as was natural in such a situation, any other place more secure than the present. His last retreat was to a small farm which he had at Caieta. The house was surrounded by the appointed executioners of the bloody commission. After an unsuccessful attempt of his attendants to save him, by conveying him away on a litter towards the sea, Popilius Lænas, a military tribune, in whose behalf Cicero had formerly pleaded when he was accused of parricide, came up to the litter, and struck off his head, while some of the soldiers, who were standing by, cut off his hands. These mangled remains of this great man were conveyed to Antony, who in triumphant revenge placed them upon the rostra of that pulpit from which the orations against him had been delivered: not, however, without exciting much indignation in the populace, who bitterly lamented the tragical end of this father of his country. His death

⁴⁵ Plut. l. c. Cic. Tusc. Q. l. i. c. 1. De Off. l. ii. c. 1, 2. Ep. Fam. l. xiii. ep. 77. l. ii. ep. 5. l. i. ep. 7. l. vi. ep. 19. l. ix. ep. 11. Val. Max. l. vii. c. 18.

happened in the 710th⁴⁷ year of the city, and in the sixty-fourth year of his age.⁴⁸

From the whole history of the life of Cicero it appears, that, though exceedingly ambitious of glory, he wanted strength of mind sufficient to sustain him in the pursuit. Perpetually fluctuating between hope and fear, he was unable to support with equanimity the convulsions of a disordered state and the commotions of a civil war; and therefore, was always attempting to reconcile the contending parties, when he ought to have been maintaining, by vigorous measures, the cause which he approved. He was, in his natural temper, so averse to contention, that his spirits were depressed, more than became a wise man, by private injuries and domestic vexations. On many public occasions he discovered a surprising degree of timidity. When, under the immediate apprehension of danger from popular tumult, he undertook the defence of Milo, his panic was so great, that he was seized with a universal tremor, and was scarcely able to speak; so that his client, notwithstanding his innocence, was sentenced into exile.⁴⁹ His chief delight was in the society and conversation of learned men; and many elegant specimens remain of his ability in relating, or framing, philosophical conferences. But in his private intercourse with his friends, as well as in the forum and the senate, he discovered a degree of vanity scarcely to be reconciled with true greatness of mind. From these circumstances, compared with the general character of his writings, it seems reasonable to conclude, that Cicero's chief excellences were fertility of imagination and readiness of invention; and that his talents were better adapted to the splendid offices of eloquence, than to accurate and profound investigations of philosophy.

What kind and degree of service Cicero rendered to philosophy will, in some measure, appear from a distinct enumeration of his philosophical writings. On the subject of the philosophy of nature, his principal works are, the fragment of his translation of Plato's *Timæus*, entitled *De Universitate*, "On the Universe;" and his treatise *De Natura Deorum*, "On the Nature of the Gods," in which

⁴⁷ B. C. 43.

⁴⁸ Plut. l. c. Vid. Liv. apud Senec. App. Dion. Vell. Patero. &c. Mart. l. iii. ep. 66.

⁴⁹ Dio, l. xlv. Plut. l. c.

the opinions of the Epicureans and Stoics concerning the Divine Nature are distinctly stated and examined. To the same class may be referred the books "On Divination and Fate," which are imperfect, and "The Dream of Scipio," (commented upon by Macrobius) which is founded upon the Platonic doctrines concerning the soul of the world; and the state of human souls after death. On moral philosophy, Cicero treats in several distinct works. In his treatise *De Finibus*, "On Moral Ends," which is a history of the doctrine of the Grecian philosophers concerning the ultimate ends of life, he states the different opinions of the several sects upon this subject, enumerates the leading arguments by which they were supported, and points out the difficulties which press upon each opinion. In his *Questiones Tusculanae*, "Tusculan Questions," he treats of the contempt of death; patience under bodily pain; the remedies of grief, anxiety, and other painful perturbations of mind; and the sufficiency of virtue to a happy life. In the dialogues entitled *Cato* and *Laelius*, he discourses concerning the consolations of old age, and concerning the duties and pleasures of friendship. His explanation of "Six Stoical Paradoxes," seems rather to have been written as a rhetorical exercise, than as a serious disquisition in philosophy. His treatise *De Officiis*, "On Moral Offices," addressed to his son Marcus, containing an excellent summary of practical ethics, written chiefly upon Stoical principles, but not without some mixture of the Peripatetic. The grounds of jurisprudence are explained in his book *De Legibus*, "On Laws," which is not entire. Cicero nowhere so clearly discovers his own opinions; as in his *Questiones Academicæ*, "Academic Questions," of which only two books are extant, the second inscribed with the name of Lucullus. In this work he raises up the whole edifice of Grecian doctrine, that, after the manner of the Academic sect, and particularly of Carneades, he may demolish it. As a storehouse of materials for a history of the Grecian sects, this piece is of great value. It is much to be regretted, that, among the philosophical works of Cicero, we do not find his *Hortentius*, or "Exhortation to the Study of Philosophy," which Augustine confesses operated upon his mind, as a powerful *stimulus* to the pursuit of wisdom. His "Economics" and "Republic" are also lost.

Upon the most cursory inspection of Cicero's philosophical writings, it must appear, that he rather related the opinions of others, than advanced any new doctrine from his own conceptions. It may, however, be of some importance to inquire, more particularly, how a man, who devoted so much of his leisure to study, philosophised, and what tenets he espoused.

Although, for reasons already explained, Cicero attached himself chiefly to the Academic sect, he did not neglect to inform himself of the doctrines of other sects, and discovered much learning and ingenuity in refuting their dogmas. In the sects which he rejected, he could easily distinguish those parts of their doctrine which were most valuable; and he had the good sense and candour to profit by wisdom, wherever he found it. He was an admirer of the doctrine of the Stoics concerning natural equity and civil law; and adopted their ideas concerning morals, as he himself informs his son,⁵⁰ not with the servility of an interpreter, but with that freedom which left him the full exercise of his own judgment. That he held Plato in high respect, especially for his philosophy of nature, appears from his own words,⁵¹ and from the labour which he bestowed upon the *Timæus*. As he conceived the Peripatetic philosophy to differ but little, on the subject of ethics, from the Socratic and Platonic doctrine; he paid it some respect in his moral writings,⁵² although in other places it fell under his censure. The sect to which he was most averse, notwithstanding that one of his earliest preceptors,⁵³ and several of his intimate friends, belonged to this school, was the Epicurean;⁵⁴ and the contempt in which he held the doctrine of this sect led him to listen with too much credulity to the calumnies, with which the character of its founder was loaded.

Upon the whole; there can be no doubt that Cicero belonged to that class of Academics, who, after Carneades, whilst they confessed the imbecility of the human understanding, admitted opinions on the ground of probability. "It do not," says Cicero,⁵⁵ "rank myself among those who suffer their minds to wander in error, without any

⁵⁰ De Off. l. i. c. 2.

⁵¹ Tusc. Qu. l. i. c. 21.

⁵² De Off. l. i. c. 2.

⁵³ De Orat. l. iii.

⁵⁴ De Off. l. ii. c. 2.

⁵⁵ Tusc. Q. l. i. c. 2.

guide to direct their course. For, of what use is the human intellect, or rather, of what value is human life, if all principles, not only of reasoning, but of action, be taken away? If I cannot, with many philosophers, say, that some things are certain and others uncertain; I willingly allow that some things are probable, others improbable. It may be easily perceived, from the general cast of Cicero's writings, that the Academic sect was best suited to his natural disposition. Though all his philosophical works, he paints in lively colours, and with all the graces of fine writing, the opinions of philosophers; and relates in the diffuse manner of an orator, the arguments on each side of the question in dispute: but we seldom find him diligently examining the exact weight of evidence in the scale of reason; carefully deducing accurate conclusions from certain principles; or exhibiting a series of arguments in a close and systematic arrangement. On the contrary we frequently hear him declaiming eloquently instead of reasoning conclusively, and meet with unequivocal proofs, that he was better qualified to dispute on either side with the Academics, than to decide upon the question with the Dogmatists. In fine, Cicero appears rather to have been a warm admirer, and an elegant memorialist of philosophy, than himself to have merited a place in the first order of philosophers.

The reader will easily perceive from what has been advanced, that notwithstanding the great number of philosophical writings which Cicero has left, it would be in vain to attempt a delineation of his philosophical doctrines. For, following the Academic method of philosophizing, he instituted no system of his own, but either employed himself in opposing the tenets of other sects; or, where he chose to dogmatise, selected from different sects such opinions, as, he apprehended, could be most plausibly supported, or would most easily admit of rhetorical decoration. In physics, if we except his translation of the *Timæus* of Plato, and what he has written in the Platonic manner in "The Dream of Scipio," Cicero has advanced nothing in his writings, which is not purely academical, and adapted to overturn the systems of the Dogmatists. In ethics,

however, especially upon subjects of practical morality, he misanthropists, and other Stoics, his chief guides, and after them adopted a preceptive tone, and a systematic arrangement. But it is wholly unnecessary to enter into the details of his moral doctrine, which is of the same colour with that of the Stoic school, except where it takes a slight tincture from the Peripatetic. With respect to theology, there is little reason to doubt that Cicero, whilst he suspended his judgment concerning the subtle questions which had agitated the Grecian schools, adhered to the fundamental principles of religion on the ground of probability, as naturally dictated by reason, and therefore commonly embraced by mankind.⁴⁰

The Stoic as well as the Academic school was patronised by many eminent men in the Roman republic. The most distinguished lawyers were, as we have seen, inclined towards this sect, on account of the fitness of its moral doctrine to the purposes of civil policy. *Q. Lucilius Balbus* became so eminent a master of the Stoic philosophy, that Cicero, in his dialogue "On the Nature of the Gods,"⁴¹ appoints him to the office of defending the Stoical theology. Several of the most zealous and able supporters of the tottering republic, derived no small part of their strength from the principles of Stoicism. But the man, who above all the rest claims our notice, as a Stoic in character as well as opinion, is the younger Cato.

Cato of Utica, so called from the last memorable scene of his life, was a descendant of Cato the Censor, whose rigid virtue, as we have seen, opposed the first admission of Grecian learning into Rome. From his childhood he discovered in his countenance and language, and even in his sports, an inflexible spirit. He had such a natural gravity of aspect, that his features were scarcely ever relaxed into a smile. He was seldom angry, but when provoked, was not without difficulty appeased. In acquiring learning, he was slow of perception, but his memory faithfully retained whatever it received. Being in early life elected to the office of a *flamen* of Apollo, he made choice of Antipater, a Syrian, of the Stoic sect, as his preceptor in morals and jurisprudence, that, in his sacred character he might

exhibit an example of the most rigid virtue. His language, both in private and public, was a true image of his mind, free from all affectation of novelty or elegance; plain, concise, and somewhat harsh; but enlivened with strokes of genius, which could not but be heard without pleasure. He inured himself to endure, without injury, the extremes of heat and cold. To express his contempt of effeminate and luxurious manners, he refused to wear the purple robe which belonged to his rank, and often appeared in public without his tunic, and with his feet uncovered: and this he did, not for the sake of attracting admiration, but to teach his fellow citizens, that a wise man ought to be ashamed of nothing which is not in itself shameful.⁵⁸

In the civil war, Cato carried his virtues with him into military life, and exhibited before his fellow commanders an example of unusual moderation, sobriety, and magnanimity. Whilst he was in Macedonia, in the capacity of military tribune, it happened that his brother Cæpio, whom he had always loved, perished in shipwreck. Cato, upon this occasion, forgot his Stoical principles, and so far yielded to the impulse of nature, as to embrace, with many tears and lamentations, the dead body which had been cast upon the shore, and to bury it with splendid sepulchral honours: so difficult is it, by any artificial discipline of philosophy, to subdue the feelings of nature.⁵⁹ During his residence in Greece, Cato having heard of an eminent Stoic, Athenodorus Cordyliones, who had rejected the proffered friendship of several princes, and was now passing his old age in retirement at Pergamus, resolved if possible to make him his friend; and as he had no hopes of succeeding by message, undertook, for this sole purpose, a voyage into Asia. Upon the interview, Athenodorus found in Cato a soul so congenial to his own, that he was easily prevailed upon to accompany him into Greece, and, after the term of Cato's military service was expired, to reside with him, as his companion and friend, at Rome. Cato boasted of this acquisition, more than of his military exploits. After his return, he devoted his time either to the society of

⁵⁸ Plut. in Cat. Val. Max. l. iii. c. 1. Cic. Orat. pro Muræna, c. 29.
Ep. Fam. xv. 5.

⁵⁹ Plut. ib.

Athenodorus, and his other philosophical friends, or to the service of his fellow citizens, in the forum.⁶⁰

When Cato had, by diligent study, qualified himself for the duties of magistracy, he accepted of the office of quæstor. He corrected the abuses of this important trust, which negligence or dishonesty had introduced, and by his upright and steady administration of justice merited the highest applause. In every other capacity, he manifested the same inviolable regard to truth and integrity. Whilst he was engaged in the business of the senate, he was indefatigable in the discharge of his senatorial duty: and even when he was among his philosophical friends at his farm in Luca, he never interrupted his attention to the welfare of the state. It was during a recess of this kind, that he discovered the danger which threatened the republic from the machinations of Metellus; and, with a truly patriotic spirit, he instantly determined, that private enjoyment should give way to public duty. That he might be in a capacity to oppose with effect the designs of Metellus, he offered himself candidate for the office of tribune of the people; and, being chosen, executed the office (notwithstanding the illiberal jests which Cicero, inconsistently enough with his general professions and character, on this occasion cast upon his Stoical virtue) with a degree of probity, candour, and independence, which fully established the public opinion of his superior merit.⁶¹

At a period when the Roman affairs were in the utmost confusion, and powerful factions were repeatedly formed against the state, Cato withstood the assaults which were made upon liberty by Marcellus, Pompey, Cæsar, and others, with such a firm and resolute adherence to the principles of public virtue, that no apprehension of danger to himself or his family could ever induce him to listen to any proposal, which implied a treacherous desertion of his country. Whilst some were supporting the interest of Cæsar, and others that of Pompey, Cato, himself a host, withstood them both, and convinced them that there was another interest still existing, that of the state. When he saw that the necessity of the times required it, in order

⁶⁰ Plat. ib. ⁶¹ Plat. ib. Cic. Pref. parad. Epist. Fam. xv. 5. Orat. pro Muræna, c. 29.

that, of two impending evils, the least might be chosen, he persuaded the senate to create Pompey sole consul, that, if possible, he might crush the growing power of Cæsar, which threatened destruction to the freedom of the republic. It was with this design alone, that, upon Cæsar's approach towards Rome, he declared himself on the side of Pompey, and that he afterwards became a companion of his flight, and at the head of an army supported his cause. The same public spirit afterwards prompted him to endeavour to save his country from the last extremities of a civil war, by proposing a reconciliation between the contending powers. And when Pompey treated the proposal with neglect, and seemed to distrust the adviser, Cato, still true to the cause of freedom, at the battle of Dyrrachium roused the languid spirit of the soldiers by an animated address; but afterwards when, in the course of the engagement, he saw his countrymen butchering one another, he bitterly lamented the fatal effects of ambition.^a

After the battle of Pharsalia, which at once cut off the hopes of Pompey, Cato, with a small band of select friends, and fifteen cohorts, of which Pompey had given him the command, still attempted to support the expiring cause of liberty. His determination was, to follow Pompey into Egypt, and there share his fate: but when he arrived upon the African coast, he was met by Sextus, Pompey's younger son, who informed him of his father's death. Cato, upon hearing these tidings, marched the small force which was under his command into Lybia, to meet Scipio, Pompey's father-in-law, and Varus, to whom Pompey had given the government in Africa, and who were paying their court to Juba. Though strongly importuned, he refused to take the command of the African forces from those officers, to whom it had been legally appointed: but, at the request of Scipio, and of the inhabitants, he took the charge of Utica.^b

The defeat of Scipio and Juba, in the battle of Thapsus, contracted the remaining strength of the Roman republic within the walls of this small city. Here Cato, as his last effort in the service of his country, convened his little senate to deliberate upon measures for the public good. Their consultations proved ineffectual; and Cato despaired

^a Plut. ib. Vell. Flor. Dio. &c. Sen. Ep. 96. 14.

^b Plut.

of being longer able to serve his country. He therefore advised his friends to provide for their safety by flight, but, for his own part, resolved not to survive the liberties of Rome. At the close of an evening, in which he had conversed with more than usual spirit on topics of philosophy, he retired with great cheerfulness into his chamber, where, after reading a portion of Plato's *Phædo*, he ordered his sword to be brought. His attendants delayed; and his son and friends importuned him to desist from his purpose. The stern philosopher dismissed them from his apartment, and again took up the book. After a short interval, he executed his purpose by stabbing himself below the breast. By those who have been better instructed, this action will, doubtless, be deemed criminal; and will be imputed to rashness, or to weakness. But it should be remembered, that the situation of Cato, in concurrence with his Stoical principles, strongly impelled him to this fatal deed; and that whatever censure he may deserve on this account, he supported, through his whole life, a character of inflexible integrity, and uncorrupted public spirit. Whilst he lived, he held up before his fellow-citizens a pattern of manly virtue; and, when he died, he taught the conquerors of the world, that the noble mind can never be subdued.⁶³

— Cuncta terrarum subacta,
Præter atrocem animum Catonis.⁶⁴

The *Peripatetic Philosophy* found its way into Rome, in the time of Sylla, with the writings of Aristotle and Theophrastus. That tyrant, during the siege of Athens, had shewn his contempt of the Muses, by sacrilegiously invading their ancient seats, the groves of Academus, and the Lyceum, in order to furnish himself with materials for carrying on the assault: and when the city fell into his hands, among other articles of plunder, he became possessed of the library of Apellicon, who, as we have before related, had purchased the writings of Aristotle and Theophrastus

⁶³ Plut. J. C. Conf. Florus. l. iv. c. 2. Senec. ep. 20. 24. 26. De Providentia, c. 2. Arr. Epict. l. i. diss. 9. 24.

⁶⁴ Hor. Carm. l. ii. Od. 3. v. 24. Conf. Lucan. l. iii. v. 383. l. ix. 591, &c.

⁶⁵ Lucan. l. iii. v. 383. l. ix. 591, &c.

— I see the world subdued,
All but the mighty soul of Cato.

from their illiterate descendants, in whose hands they had long lain concealed. This rich prize was brought to Rome, and soon engaged the attention of those who knew the value of Greek learning. Tyrannio, an eminent grammarian and critic, whom Lucullus had brought as a captive from Pontus, and whose learning and genius soon procured him liberty, and raised him to distinction, obtained permission to peruse, and, wherever he chose, transcribe the manuscripts. His first care was, to bring to light the writings of Aristotle and Theophrastus. When Andronicus Rhodius, who was not ignorant of the fame of these philosophers, was informed of Tyrannio's good fortune, he was exceedingly desirous of possessing the writings of these philosophers, and engaged Tyrannio to give him an exact copy of the originals. Finding, upon perusal, that they were in many places imperfect, through the decay of the materials upon which they were written, he supplied the deficiencies by conjecture, and at the same time attempted to illustrate obscure passages by notes. In this corrected, or rather adulterated state, these works of Aristotle and Theophrastus were dispersed among the Romans.⁶⁵

The obscurity of the writings of Aristotle, greatly obstructed the progress of the Peripatetic philosophy. Cicero, in the preface to his *Topics*, written after the death of Cæsar, relates,⁶⁶ that Trebatius, a celebrated lawyer, meeting with Aristotle's treatise on *Topics* in Cicero's library, attempted to read it, but was obliged to call in the assistance of a skilful rhetorician; and, after all, complained to Cicero, that he was unable to understand the work. Cicero replied, "I am not at all surprised, that your rhetorician could not explain to you the writings of this philosopher, who is understood by very few even of the philosophers themselves." But, notwithstanding these difficulties, the doctrine of Aristotle was not without its admirers and patrons in Rome. Cato, though entirely devoted to the Stoic philosophy, had among his philosophical friends Demetrius, a Peripatetic, and conversed with him a little before his death.⁶⁷ Crassus paid some attention to the Aristotelian philosophy, and employed

⁶⁵ Plut. in Sylla et Lucullo. Hesych. et Suidas in Tyran. Porphy. Vit. Plotin. c. 26.

⁶⁶ Ad Trebatium.

⁶⁷ Plut. in Cat.

Alexander Antiochenus, of this school, as his preceptor.⁶⁸ Piso, whom Cicero represents as well read in philosophy, had with him, many years, a Peripatetic of some note, named Staseas.⁶⁹ The father of Roman eloquence himself, notwithstanding his predilection for the Academic sect, gave sufficient proof that he had some respect for the Peripatetic philosophy, by undertaking to explain the Topics of Aristotle; by mixing several things from his school with the Stoical doctrine of morals, in his Offices; and, above all, by committing the charge of his son's education at Athens to Cratippus, the Peripatetic, whom he pronounces to be, in his judgment, not only the first of all the Peripatetics, but the most excellent philosopher of his age.⁷⁰ Brutus, when he passed with his army into Greece, during his stay at Athens, attended upon Theomnestus the Academic, and Cratippus the Peripatetic, and conversed with them upon philosophy.⁷¹ And Pompey, after his defeat at Pharsalia, meeting with Cratippus at Mytilene, discoursed with him concerning Divine Providence.⁷²

The *Epicurean Philosophy*, in consequence of the violent opposition which it had met with in Greece from the Stoics, and the irregularities which had been practised by some of its followers, entered Rome under a heavy load of obloquy. This was greatly increased by the vehemence with which Cicero inveighed against this sect, and by the easy credit which he gave to the calumnies industriously circulated against its founder.⁷³ Nevertheless, there were many persons of high distinction in Rome, to whom the character of Epicurus appeared less censurable, and who were of opinion that true philosophy was to be found in his garden. Among these were Torquatus, Velleius, Trebatius, Piso, Albutius, Pansa, and Atticus;⁷⁴ men of respectable characters in Rome, several of whom lived in habits of intimacy with Cicero.⁷⁵ Atticus, particularly, was his bosom friend, to whom he wrote many confidential letters, afterwards collected in sixteen books, and preserv-

⁶⁸ Id. in Crasso. ⁶⁹ Cic. de Fin. l. v. c. 1. De Orat. l. i. c. 22.

⁷⁰ De Univ. c. 1. De Off. l. iii. c. 2. l. i. c. 1. Ep. Fam. l. xvi. ep. 21. Plut. in Cic. ⁷¹ Plut. in Bruto. ⁷² Id. in Pomp.

⁷³ Cic. de Fin. l. ii. Tusc. Q. l. i. 3. Fam. ep. xiii. l. Orat. in Pisonem, c. 28.

⁷⁴ Gassend. de Vit. Epic. l. i. c. 6. ⁷⁵ Ac. Qu. l. iv.

ed among his works. Fond of literary leisure, Atticus withdrew from the disturbances of the state to Athens, where he was highly respected by the citizens of every rank. Here he studied the doctrines of Epicurus, under Phædrus and Zeno the Sidonian. That he entirely devoted himself to this school, appears from many passages in the writings of Cicero, and from the particulars of his life, given by Cornelius Nepos. C. Cassius, too, according to Plutarch,⁷⁷ is to be added to the list of Epicureans. Several Greek philosophers of this sect enjoyed the patronage of illustrious Romans, among whom may be particularly mentioned Patro, whom Cicero recommended to the protection of Memmius.⁷⁸

Some admirers of Epicurus attempted to introduce his philosophy into Rome in the Latin tongue. Amafanus, Catus Insuber, and others, borrowing their notions of pleasure, not from the founder of the school, but from some of his degenerate followers, under the notion of Epicurean doctrine wrote precepts of luxury. Quintilian⁷⁹ speaks of Catus as an amusing trifler : Horace thus ridicules him : *

Unde et quo Catus ? non est mihi tempus aventi
Ponere signa novis preceptis, qualia vincant
Pythagoram, Anytique reum, doctumque Platona. *

The true doctrine of Epicurus was not fully stated by any Roman writer, till Lucretius, with much accuracy of conception and clearness of method, as well as with great strength and elegance of diction, unfolded the Epicurean system in his poem *De Rerum Natura*; "*On the Nature of Things*." That T. Carus Lucretius was a Roman, is certain, but it is doubtful whether he was of the ancient and noble family of the Lucretii. He was born, according to Eusebius, in the year of Rome six hundred and fifty-nine.⁸¹ Of his parentage and education little is known, but

⁷⁷ Plat. in Brut. t. v. p. 690. 711. Cic. Phil. ii. ⁷⁹ Fam. ep. xiii. c. 1.

⁷⁸ Inst. l. i. c. 1.

⁸⁰ Sat. l. ii. s. 4.

⁸¹ B. C. 94.

* Whence comes my Catus ? whither in such haste ?

I have no time in idle prate to waste :

I must away, to treasure in my mind

A set of precepts novel and refin'd ;

Such as Pythagoras could never reach,

Nor Socrates, nor scienc'd Plato teach.

FRANCIS.

it is probable that he was sent to Athens, and there studied philosophy under Zeno the Sidonian, and Phædrus. Towards the close of his life he was often insane; and it was during his lucid intervals that he wrote his celebrated poem. It is addressed to his friend and patron Memmius: it was revised by Cicero, and is still extant. Lucretius died by his own hand, in the forty-fourth year of his age, and in the seven hundred and third year of Rome.²²*

The *Pyrrhonic* or *Sceptic* sect was not followed among the Romans: not because the method of philosophising adopted by this sect had no admirers, but because it was superseded by the Academic philosophy, which pursued the same track, but with greater caution and sobriety. The heights of extravagance, to which the Sceptics had by this time advanced, both in theory and practice, had brought such a general odium upon the sect, that although *Ænesidemus* attempted to revive Pyrrhonism at Alexandria, and inscribed his works to Lucius Tubero, an illustrious Roman, it does not appear that Rome gave any public countenance to the Sceptic philosophy.²³†

* Euseb. Chron. Vid. Lambin. Giffes. Bayl. de Vit. Lucr. Voss. de Poet. Lat. p. 15. * B. C. 50. † Cic. de Fin. l. ii.

† Vidend. Heumann. Act. Phil. v. iii. p. 63. Gaudent. de Phil. apud Rom. initio, &c. Pis. 1643. Cellarii Diss. de Stud. Rom. Budd. de Stud. Lib. ap. Rom. Falster. Qu. Rom. Schilter. Manud. Phil. Mor. ad Jurisprud. Everard. Otto de Stoica Juriscons. Ph. Horn. Hist. Phil. l. iv. c. 4, 5. Voss. de Hist. Lat. l. i. c. 7. 16. P. Blount Cens. Auth. p. 60. Cozzand de Magisterio Antiq. Phil. l. iii. p. 231. Huet de la Foiblesse, &c. l. i. c. 14. § 25. Scaligeriana Prim. p. 146. Ciceronis Vita à Mylæo, Bullingero, A. de Scarparia, Const. Felice, C. Preysio, Corrado, P. Ramo, Lambino, Brantio, Herbesto, Chytræo, Vallamberto, Cappello, Sagittario, Masenio, Middleton. Kirober in Latio. c. ii. Reimman. Syst. Ant. Lit. p. 496. Perizonius de Erud. et Indust. Cic. Franeq. 1682. Morhoff. Polyh. Lit. t. iii. l. i. c. 17. t. i. l. iv. c. 11. § 17. Jasonis de Nores Instit. in Cic. Phil. Cat. 1597. Lips. 1721. Buscheri Ethic. Cic. Parker's Apology, Lond. 1702. Wopken's Lction. Tull. Amst. 1730. Voss. de Poet. Lat. p. 15. Suidas Bayle.

CHAP. II.

OF THE STATE OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE
ROMAN EMPIRE.

SECT. I.

Of the general State of Philosophy under the Emperors.

IN the midst of the commotions and changes which took place in the Roman state, at the period when it lost its liberty, and became subject to the arbitrary control of a monarch; whilst almost every thing else assumed a new aspect, philosophy still retained its station, and appeared with increasing lustre. This is, perhaps, chiefly to be ascribed to the cultivated taste, and elegant manners of the Augustan age. Many persons of the first distinction in Rome, with Augustus himself, were patrons of literature and science. During the reign of this prince, so generally prevalent was the study of philosophy, that almost every statesman, lawyer, and man of letters, was conversant with the writings of philosophers, and discovered a bias towards some ancient system. And this taste continued through several succeeding ages, even under those emperors, who were more addicted to pleasure than to wisdom; till, in process of time, the distinction of sects was confounded in that monstrous production of monkish ignorance, the Scholastic philosophy.

The sentiments and language of almost all the Roman poets were tinctured with the philosophy of some Grecian sect.

Virgil, whose immortal works remain a perfect model of poetic harmony and elegance, was in his youth instructed by Syro in the doctrine of Epicurus; and the spirit of this doctrine appears in several parts of his writings. It is true, that after the usual practice of poets, and other writers of this period, he introduces allusions to the dogmas of different sects, where he judged that they might serve to illustrate and adorn his subject. Thus, in the fourth Georgic, he derives the origin of things, after the Stoics, from a Divine principle, pervading the whole mass of matter:¹

¹ v. 220.

His quidam signis atque hæc exempla secuti,
 Ease apibus partem divinæ mentis, et haustus
 Ætherios dixere : deum namque ire per omnes
 Terrasque, tractusque maris, cœlumque profundum.
 Hinc pecudes, armenta, viros, genus omne ferarum,
 Quemque sibi tenues nascentem arcessere vitas.
 Scilicet huc reddi deinde, ac resoluta referri
 Omnia : nec morti esse locum, sed viva volare
 Sideris in numerum atque alto succedere cœlo.²

In another place³ the poet introduces Anchises philosophising upon the same principles :

Principio cœlum, ac terras, camposque liquentes
 Lucentemque globum lunæ, Titaniaque astra,
 Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
 Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet, &c.⁴

Virgil's whole doctrine concerning a future state, divested of its mythological clothing, proceeds, indeed, upon the Stoic, rather than the Platonic, or Pythagoric system. It must not however be hence inferred, that he was himself a Stoic. In the passages just quoted, he relates the opinions of others, and expressly introduces the former as such : *His quidam signis*. But in other parts of his works, he makes use of the doctrine and language of the Epicurean school : for example :⁵

Led by such wonders sages have opin'd,
 That bees have portions of a heav'nly mind ;
 That God pervades, and like one common soul,
 Fills, feeds, and animates the world's great whole ;
 That flocks, herds, beasts, and men from him receive
 Their vital breath, in him all move and live ;
 That souls discerpt from him shall never die,
 But back resolv'd to God and heav'n shall fly,
 And live for ever in the starry sky.

J. WARTON.

² Æn. vi. v. 724.

Know first a spirit with an active flame
 Pervades and animates the mighty frame,
 Runs through the wat'ry worlds, the fields of air,
 The pond'rous earth, the depths of heav'n, and there
 Glows in the sun and moon, and burns in every star :
 Thus mingling with the mass, the general soul
 Lives in the parts, and agitates the whole.

PITT.

³ Ecl. vi. v. 31, &c.

Namque cæcebat, uti magnum per inane coacta
 Semina terrarumque, animoque morisve fuissent
 Et liquidi simul ignis; ut his exordia primis
 Omnia, et ipse tener mundi concreverit orbis.⁶

And again:⁷

Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,
 Atque metus omnes et inexorabile fatum
 Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari!⁸

The predilection of Virgil for the Epicurean system may be also inferred from his intimate acquaintance with the poem of Lucretius, to which, in the course of his works, he is frequently indebted. It must not be omitted, that Virgil, in the fifty-second year of his age, set out for Greece, with the design of putting the finishing hand to his *Æneid*, and then devoting the remainder of his days to the study of philosophy: but that, being seized with illness upon his journey, he returned to Brundisium, and died. He was buried, according to his request, at Naples.⁹

Horace, through all his writings breathes the Epicurean spirit, and sometimes appears to confess his partiality to this school.¹⁰ But we are not to suppose that he entertained a very serious attachment to any system of philosophy. He was rather disposed to ridicule the folly of all the sects, than to become a strenuous advocate for any one of them. He had indeed, when young, studied philosophy in the Academy at Athens.¹¹

Adjecere bonæ paulo plus artis Athenæ;
 Scilicet ut possem curvo dignoscere rectum,
 Atque inter silvas Academi quærere verum.¹²

* He sung, at universal nature's birth,
 How seeds of water, fire, and air, and earth,
 Fell through the void; whence order rose, and all
 The beauties of this congregated ball. J. WARTON.

⁷ *Georg.* ii. v. 400, &c.

* Happy the man, whose vigorous soul can pierce
 Through the formation of this universe!
 Who nobly dares despise with soul sedate,
 The din of Acheron, and vulgar fears, and fate. Id.

⁹ *Donatus de Vit. Virgil.* ed. H. Steph. p. 6.

¹⁰ *Ep.* i. i. ep. 4. *Carm.* i. ii. od. 34. ¹¹ *Ep.* i. ii. ep. 2. v. 43.

¹² Athens, kind nurse of science, led my youth
 From error's maze to the straight path of truth;

But he expressly asserts his independence, and disclaims subjection to the authority of any master.¹³

Quid verum atque decens curo, et rogo, et omnis in
hoc sum;

Condo, et compono, quæ mox depromere possim:

Ac ne forte roges, quo me duce, quo lare tuter;

Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri,

Quo me cunque rapit tempestas, deferor hospes.

Nunc agilis fio, et mersor civilibus undis;

Virtutis veræ custos rigidusque satelles,

Nunc in Aristippi furtim præcepta relabor.¹⁴

The works of *Ovid* abound with passages, which prove him to have been well acquainted with the Greek philosophy, and particularly with the ancient theogonies. In his *Metamorphoses* he introduces the doctrines of the Pythagorean school concerning the transmigration of the soul, and the vicissitudes of nature.¹⁵ But no certain judgment can be formed concerning his philosophical opinions, from tenets which are introduced merely to embellish a work of imagination.

Manilius, in his astronomical poem, dedicated to Augustus, strenuously opposes the doctrine of Epicurus concerning nature, and maintains with the Stoics, that God is the soul of the world, pervading and animating all things:¹⁶

In search of wisdom taught my feet to rove
Through the learn'd shades of Academus' grove.

¹³ Ep. l. i. ep. l. v. 11, &c.

¹⁴ What right, what true, what fit we justly call,
This shall be all my care; for this is all:
To lay this harvest up, and hoard with haste
What every day will want, e'en to the last.

But ask not to what teacher I apply;

Sworn to no master, of no sect am I:

Still as the tempest drives I shape my way;

Now active plunge into the world's wide sea;

Now virtue's precepts rigidly defend,

Nor to the world—the world to me shall bend.

Now down a stream more yielding smoothly glide,

And the gay Aristippus make my guide.

¹⁵ L. xv. v. 150, &c.

¹⁶ L. i. v. 422. Conf. l. ii. v. 61.

**Quis credat tantas operum sine numine moles
Ex minimis cæcoque creatum fœdere mundum ?**¹⁷ &c.

Lucan, in his *Pharsalia*, discovers a strong affection for the Stoic school, in which he was educated by Cornutus, an eminent preceptor afterwards to be noticed. He expresses, in forcible and beautiful language, several of the fundamental tenets of the sect: for example; ¹⁸

————— **Sic cum compage soluta
Secula tot mundi suprema coegerit hora,
Antiquum repetent iterum chaos omnia, mistis
Sidera sideribus concurrent: ignea pontum
Astra petent, tellus extendere litora nolet,
Excutietque fretum; fratri contraria Phœbo
Ibit et obliquum bigas agitare per orbem
Indignata, diem poscet sibi: totaque discors
Machina divulsi turbabit fœdera mundi.**¹⁹

The Stoic virtues *Lucan* thus represents in the character of *Cato*:

————— **Hi mores, hæc duri immota Catonis
Secta fuit, servare modum, finemque tenere
Naturamque sequi, patriæque impendere vitam:
Nec sibi sed toti genitum se credere mundo.
Huic epulæ, vicisse famem: magnique penates,
Submovisse hiemem tecto: pretiosaque vestis
Hirtam membra super, Romani more Quiritis,
Induxisse togam: Veneris huic maximus usus,
Progenies: urbi pater est, urbique maritus:
Justitiæ cultor, rigidi servator honesti;**

¹⁷ Who, that beholds the pond'rous orbs on high,
Will say, that atoms, floating in the void,
Without a guide could form this wondrous world? &c.

¹⁸ L. i. v. 74, &c.

¹⁹ So shall one hour, at last, this globe control,
Break up the vast machine, dissolve the whole:
Then Chaos hoar shall seize his former right,
And reign with anarchy and endless night:
The starry lamps shall combat in the sky,
And, lost and blended in each other, die:
Quench'd in the deep, the heavenly fire shall fall,
And ocean cast abroad o'erspread the ball:
The moon no more her well-known course shall run,
But rise from western waves and meet the sun:
Ungoverned shall she quit her ancient way,
Herself ambitious to supply the day:

In commune bonus: nullosque Catonis in actus
Sabrepsit, partemque tulit sibi nata voluptas.²⁰*

Persius, who was also instructed by *Cornutus*, was a zealous advocate for the Stoical doctrine of morals. Of this his third satire affords a striking example; where, in the person of a Stoic philosopher, he reproves the Roman youth for idleness and effeminacy, and recommends to them the study of philosophy as the best guide to virtue and happiness.

Discite, o miseri, et causas cognoscite rerum
Quid sumus, et quidnam victuri gignimur, ordo
Quis datus, aut metæ quam mollis flexus, et unde,
Quis modus argento, quid fas optare, quid asper
Utile nummus habet, patriæ carisque propinquis
Quantum elargire deceat; quem te Deus esse
Jussit, et humana qua parte locatus es in re.²¹†

Confusion wild shall all around be hurld,
And discord and disorder tear the world.

Rowe.

* L. ii. v. 360, &c.

* These were the stricter manners of the man,
And this the stubborn course in which they ran;
The golden mean unchanging to pursue
Constant to keep the purposed end in view;
Religiously to follow nature's laws,
And die with pleasure in his country's cause,
To think he was not for himself design'd,
But born to be of use to all mankind.
To him 'twas feasting, hunger to repress,
And home-spun garments were his costly dress:
No marble pillars reared his roof on high,
'Twas warm, and kept him from the winter sky:
He sought no end of marriage but increase,
Nor wish'd a pleasure, but his country's peace:
That occupied the tenderest cares of life,
His country was his children and his wife.
From justice' righteous lore he never swerv'd,
But rigidly his honesty preserv'd.
On universal good his thoughts were bent,
Nor knew what gain, or self-affection meant;
And while his benefits the public share,
Cato was always last in Cato's care.

Rowe.

† Sat. iii. v. 66, &c.

† Attend then, wretched youth, in time attend,
To ev'ry natural cause, and moral end.

The tragic poet *Seneca* every where discovers what sect of philosophers he espoused: in his dramatic writings Stoic philosophy treads the stage in buskins.

What has been said concerning the philosophical character of the Roman poets, may also be asserted of the historians. The writings of *Livy*, *Sallust*, *Tacitus*, and others, are not without proofs, that they had profited by the study of philosophy.²² *Strabo*, in his excellent geographical work, casts much light upon the subject of philosophy, and discovers himself to have been well read in the history and tenets of the Grecian sects. He classes himself among the Stoics, and follows their dogmas.²³

We might add to the list of those Romans, who studied philosophy, and were patrons of philosophers, the names of many persons of rank; such as *Mæcenas*, whose liberal attention to learned men of all descriptions has immortalized his name; *Caninius Julius*,²⁴ who met the death inflicted upon him by Caligula with Stoic firmness, expressing his satisfaction that he was so soon to make the experiment which would determine whether the soul is immortal; *Thraseas Pætus*, a Roman senator, who in his life emulated the virtues of Cato, and in whose death Nero, says Tacitus, hoped to cut off virtue herself;²⁵ together with many others, not inferior in merit, who flourished at this period. But we must hasten to consider more distinctly the state of the several sects of philosophers under the emperors.²⁶

Look into man with philosophic eye;
 Consider what we are, consider why:
 The race of life contemplate; how to start,
 And how to turn the goal with nicest art.
 Learn, to what limits wealth should be confin'd,
 Learn to what uses 'twas by Heav'n assign'd,
 Reflect, what pray'rs with reason we may frame;
 What debts our friends, our parents, country, claim.
 Know, we are posted here by power Divine;
 And think, what post that power has destin'd thine. BREWSTER

²² Senec. Ep. 100. Lips. Manud. ad Phil. Stoic. l. i. diss. 17.

²³ Vid. Geogr. l. i. ii. xiv. xvi.

²⁴ Sen. de Tranq. c. 14.

²⁵ Tac. An. l. xv. c. 20. l. xvi. c. 21. Plin. l. viii. ep. 22.

²⁶ Vidend. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. ii. p. 815. Bib. Lat. l. i. c. 4. t. ii. p. 381.
 364. Gaudentius. c. 124. Cudworth. c. v. § 4. § 29. c. iv. § 14. 20. Stoll.
 Hist. Mor. Gent. § 195, 208.

SECT. II.

Of the Philosophers who revived the Pythagoric Sect

AFTER the society of the Pythagoreans in *Magna Græcia* was broken up, the sect was never revived as a distinct body, subject to the institutions of its founder. Even at Athens, where so many regular schools of philosophy flourished, this was never attempted. We are not, therefore, to expect, that, in the time of the Roman emperors, when, as Seneca complains,²⁷ "no one attended to philosophy, or any liberal study, except to fill up the tedious intervals of public amusements, or to occupy the heavy hours of a rainy day," the Pythagoric sect should appear with all the formalities of an established school. But we shall find, during this period, philosophers who embraced the doctrines of Pythagoras as far as they were then known, or who attempted to introduce a mode of living, in some degree similar to that of the ancient Pythagoreans. There were also many who boasted, that they possessed the true Pythagorean wisdom, but who in fact perverted and corrupted it, by blending it with the doctrines of Plato and other philosophers. These latter, who are distinguished by the name of Eclectics, will be treated of in a distinct section. Of the former, the philosophers, whose celebrity entitles them to particular notice, are Anaxilaus, Sextus, Sotion, Moderatus, Apollonius Tyanæus, Secundus, and Nicomachus.

Anaxilaus of Larissa, who lived in the time of Augustus, professed himself a follower of Pythagoras,²⁸ but chiefly that he might obtain the greater credit to the pretensions which he made to an intimate acquaintance with the mysteries of nature. Pliny²⁹ relates several curious arts, by which he raised the wonder and terror of the ignorant multitude, among which was that of giving a livid and ghastly hue to the countenance by means of sulphureous flame. It is probable, that he practised his deceptions under the notion of supernatural operations; for he was banished from Italy, by the order of Augustus, for the crime of magic.³⁰

²⁷ Qu. Nat. l. vii. c. 32.²⁸ Euseb. Chron.²⁹ N. Hist. l. xix. c. 1. l. xxviii. c. 11. l. xxxv. c. 15. Iræn. l. i. c. 7. Epiphan. Hær. 34.³⁰ Euseb. l. c.

Quintus Sextius, as long as the republic existed, was a zealous supporter of the liberties of Rome; but when he saw the tyranny and cruelty of the triumvirate, he despaired of being longer able to serve his country, and determined to devote the remainder of his days to philosophy. Naturally of a gloomy temper, which was increased by the calamities of the times, Sextius made an attempt to subject his countrymen to a rigorous kind of discipline, hitherto unknown among them. The particulars of this attempt, which proved abortive, are not preserved: but it is more probable, that he endeavoured to revive the rigours of the Pythagoric school, than that, contrary to the universal practice of the Romans, he undertook, as Seneca has been understood to assert, the institution of a sect entirely new.³¹ On account of the noble spirit of intrepid virtue which his writings expressed, Seneca ranked him among the Stoics; but this seems rather designed as a rhetorical encomium upon his character, than as an accurate relation of his philosophical principles. From the circumstance of his making choice of Sotion, a Pythagorean, for his preceptor; from his abstaining from animal food, and following the Pythagorean rule of reviewing his actions at the close of every day; but especially from the nature of the institution which he planned, it appears highly probable, that Sextius was a follower of Pythagoras.³² But whatever may be thought of his sect, the manner in which Seneca speaks of his writings leaves little room to doubt, that he was an excellent practical moralist. "You will find," says he,³³ "in his writings a degree of vigour and spirit seldom to be met with in any other philosopher. Other moralists prescribe, argue, cavil; but they inspire the reader with no ardour, because they themselves possess none. But when you read Sextius, you say, he is alive, animated, bold, and even rises above humanity. He sends me away full of hardy confidence. Whatever be my disposition when I take up his writings, I confess to you, I never lay them down without being ready

³¹ Sen. Ep. 98. 59. Plin. l. xviii. c. 28. Sen. Qu. Nat. l. vii. c. 32. Plutarch de Sent. Virt. Prof. t. i. p. 186.

³² Euseb. Chron. n. 2010. Lips. ad Sen. ep. 59. Scheffer de Phil. Ital. c. ult. Gale Præf. ad Sententias Sexti, apud Opusc. myth.

³³ Sen. Ep. 6. Vid. ep. 73. 108. De Ira l. iii. c. 36.

to invite calamity, and to exclaim, Let fortune do her worst, I am prepared; give me some great occasion for the exercise of my patience, and the display of my virtue. Sextius hath this excellence, that he shews you the value of a happy life, and forbids you to despair of attaining it. You see the prize placed on high, but not inaccessible to him who ardently pursues it: virtue presents itself in person before you, at once to excite your admiration, and inspire you with hope." Writings, upon which such an encomium could with any degree of propriety be passed, must have been a valuable treasure. But we have to regret, that we cannot form a judgment of their merit; for it is very uncertain, whether the piece published under the title of *Sententiæ Sexti Pythagorei*, "Sentences of Sextus the Pythagorean," be the genuine work of this moralist.³⁴

Under the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius flourished *Sotion Alexandrinus*,³⁵ the preceptor of Seneca, who says of him, that he inspired him with a great respect for the institutions of Pythagoras, and especially for the custom of abstaining from animal food. Hence it seems not unreasonable to class Sotion among the Pythagoreans, although his moral doctrine, as represented by Seneca,³⁶ is tinged with Stoicism. This may be the more easily admitted, as Zeno himself had raised a great part of his system upon Pythagoric principles. Passages said to have been written by Sotion are preserved in Stobæus,³⁷ and in Antoninus and Maximus;³⁸ but their authenticity is doubtful.

Moderatus, who lived in the time of Nero, must also be ranked among the followers of Pythagoras.³⁹ He deserves mention, chiefly because he collected, from various ancient records, the remains of the Pythagoric doctrine, and illustrated it in several distinct treatises, particularly in eleven books "On the tenets of the Pythagorean Sect." His works were much read and admired by Origen, Jamblichus, Porphyry, and others of the Alexandrian school.

Apollonius Tyanaeus was another follower of the Pythagoric doctrine and discipline. The principal circumstances

³⁴ Fabr. Bib. Lat. t. i. p. 732. Calei Opuscula, p. 645. ed. Amst. Sextii Enoch. a Sibero. Lips. 1725. 4to.

³⁵ Euseb. Chron.

³⁶ Ep. 108. Lips in Ep. 49. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. ii. p. 412.

³⁷ Serm. 98.

³⁸ Serm. 69.

³⁹ Plat. Symp. l. viii. qu. 7. Porph. Vit. Pyth. n. 48.

of his life, as far as credit can be given to his fabulous biographer, Philostratus, are as follows:⁴⁰

Apollonius, of an ancient and wealthy family in Tyana, a city of Cappadocia, was born about the commencement of the Christian era. At fourteen years of age, his father took him to Tarsus, to be instructed by Euthydemus, a rhetorician; but he soon became dissatisfied with the luxury and indolence of the citizens, and obtained permission from his father to remove, with his preceptor, to Ægas, a neighbouring town, where was a temple of Esculapius. Here he conversed with Platonists, Stoics, Peripatetics, and Epicureans, and became acquainted with their doctrines. But, finding the Pythagorean tenets and discipline more consonant to his own views and temper, than those of any other sect, he made choice of Euxenus for his preceptor in philosophy; a man who indeed lodged his master's precepts in his memory, but paid little regard to them in practice. Apollonius, however, was not to be diverted from the strictness of the Pythagorean discipline even by the example of his preceptor. He refrained from animal food, and lived entirely upon fruits and herbs. He wore no article of clothing made of the skins of animals. He went bare-footed, and suffered his hair to grow to its full length. He spent his time chiefly in the temple of Esculapius, among the priests, by whom he was greatly admired.

After having acquired reputation at Ægas, Apollonius determined to qualify himself for the office of a preceptor in philosophy by passing through the Pythagorean discipline of silence. Accordingly, he remained five years without once exercising the faculty of speech. During this time he chiefly resided in Pamphylia and Cicilia. When his term of silence was expired, he visited Antioch, Ephesus, and other cities, declining the society of the rude and illiterate, and conversing chiefly with the priests. At sun-rising he performed certain religious rites, which he disclosed only to those who had passed through the discipline of silence. He spent the morning in instructing his disciples, whom he encouraged to ask whatever questions they pleased. At noon he held a public assembly for popular discourse. His style was neither turgid nor ab-

⁴⁰ Vid. Philostrat. Vit. Apoll. passim. Prideaux's Life of Apollonius.

struse, but truly Attie. Avoiding all prolixity, and every ironical mode of speech, he issued forth his dogmas with oracular authority, saying, on every occasion, *This I know*, or, *Such is my judgment*; herein imitating the manner of Pythagoras. Being asked, why, instead of dogmatically asserting his tenets, he did not still continue to inquire; his answer was: "I have sought for truth, when I was young: it becomes me now no longer to seek, but to teach what I have found." Apollonius, that he might still more perfectly resemble Pythagoras, determined to travel through distant nations. He proposed his design to his disciples, who were seven in number, but they refused to accompany him. He therefore entered upon his expedition, attended only by two servants. At Ninus, he took, as his associate, Damis, an inhabitant of that city, to whom he boasted, that he was skilled in all languages, though he had never learned them, and that he even understood the language of beasts and birds. The ignorant Assyrian worshipped him as a god; and, resigning himself implicitly to his direction, accompanied him wherever he went.

At Babylon, Apollonius conversed with the magi, receiving from them much instruction, and communicating to them many things in return; but to these conferences Damis was not admitted. In his visit to India, he was admitted to an interview with the king, Phraotes, and was introduced by him to Iarchus, the eldest of the Indian gymnosophists. Returning to Babylon, he passed from that city into Ionia, where he visited Ephesus, and several other places, teaching the doctrine, and recommending the discipline, of Pythagoras. On his way to Greece, he conversed with the priests of Orpheus at his temple in Lesbos. Arriving at Athens at the time when the sacred mysteries were performing, Apollonius offered himself for initiation; but the priest refused him, saying, that it was not lawful to initiate an enchanter. He discoursed with the Athenians concerning sacrifices, and exhorted them to adopt a more frugal manner of living.

After passing through some other Grecian cities, and the island of Crete, Apollonius went into Italy, with the design of visiting Rome. Just before this time, Nero, probably either because he had been deceived by the pre-

tensions of the magicians, or was apprehensive of some danger from their arts, gave orders, that all those who practised magic should be banished from the city.⁴¹ The friends of Apollonius apprized him of the hazard which was likely, at this juncture, to attend his purposed visit to Rome; and the alarm was so great, that, out of thirty-four persons, who were his stated companions, only eight chose to accompany him thither. He, nevertheless, persevered in his resolution, and, under the protection of the sacred habit, obtained admission into the city. The next day he was conducted to the Consul Telesinus, who was inclined to favour philosophers of every class, and obtained from him permission to visit the temples, and converse with the priests.

From Rome Apollonius travelled westward to Spain. Here he made an unsuccessful attempt to incite the prætor of the province of Bœtica to a conspiracy against Nero. After the death of that tyrant, he returned into Italy, on his way to Greece; whence he proceeded to Egypt, where Vespasian was making use of every expedient to establish his power. That prince easily perceived that nothing would give him greater credit with the Egyptian populace, than to have his cause espoused by one who was esteemed a favoured minister of the gods; and therefore did not fail to shew him every kind of attention and respect. The philosopher, in return, adapted his measures to the views of the new emperor, and used all his influence among the people in support of Vespasian's authority.⁴²

Upon the accession of Domitian, Apollonius was no sooner informed of the tyrannical proceedings of that emperor, and particularly of his proscription of philosophers,⁴³ than he assisted in raising a sedition against him, and in favour of Nerva, among the Egyptians; so that Domitian thought it necessary to issue an order that he should be seized, and brought to Rome. Apollonius, being informed of the order, set out immediately, of his own accord, for that city. Upon his arrival he was brought to trial; but his judge, the prætor Ælian, who had formerly

⁴¹ The credit of this fact rests wholly upon the authority of Philostratus.

⁴² Conf. Tacit. Hist. l. ii. c. 82.

⁴³ Sueton. in Domit. c. 10. A. Gell. l. xv. c. 11. Euseb. Chron. n. 2104. Plin. Paneg. c. 47.

known him in Egypt, was desirous to favour him, and so conducted the process, that it terminated in his acquittal.

Apollonius now passed over into Greece, and visited the temple of Jupiter at Olympia, the cave of Trophonius in Arcadia, and other celebrated seats of religion. Wherever he went he gained new followers. At length he settled at Ephesus, and there formed a school in some degree similar to the ancient Pythagorean college; but with this material difference, that in the school of Apollonius the door of wisdom was open to all, and every one was permitted to speak and inquire freely.

Concerning the fate of Apollonius, after he settled at Ephesus, nothing certain is related. The time, the place, and the manner of his death are unknown. It is probable, that he lived to an extreme old age, and died in the reign of Nerva. Damis, who attached himself to this philosopher at Babylon, accompanied him in his subsequent travels, and after his death became his memorialist. Philostratus has loaded his account of this extraordinary man with so many marvellous tales, that it is exceedingly difficult to determine what degree of credit is due to his narrative. He relates, for example, that while the mother of Apollonius was pregnant, the Egyptian divinity, Proteus, appeared to her, and told her, that the child she should bring forth was a god; that his birth was attended with a celestial light; that, in the Esculapian temple at Ægæ, he predicted future events; that, at the tomb of Achilles, he had a conference with the ghost of that hero; and that, whilst he was publicly discoursing at Ephesus, he suddenly paused, as if struck with a panic, and then cried out, Slay the tyrant, at the very instant that Domitian was cut off at Rome.* If to these tales we add the accounts which Philostratus gives, of the efficacy of the mere presence of Apollonius, without the utterance of a single word, in quelling popular tumults; of the chains of Prometheus, which Apollonius saw upon Mount Caucasus; of speaking trees, of pigmies, phenixes, satyrs, and dragons, which he met with in his eastern tour; and of other things equally wonderful; it will be impossible to hesitate in ascribing

* Conf. Suet. Domit. c. 23. Dio. 67.

the marvellous parts, at least, of Philostratus's narrative to his ingenuity, or his credulity.

Different opinions have been entertained concerning the character of Apollonius. Some have supposed the whole series of extraordinary events related concerning him to have been the mere invention of Philostratus and others, for the purpose of obstructing the progress of Christianity, and providing a temporary prop for the falling edifice of paganism. Others, remarking that Apollonius had acquired a high degree of celebrity long before the time of his biographer, refer the origin of these tales to the philosopher himself: but with respect to the manner in which this is to be done, they are not agreed. Some apprehend, that he was intimately acquainted with nature, and deeply skilled in medicinal arts; and that he applied his knowledge and skill to the purposes of imposture, that he might pass among a credulous multitude for something more than human: while others imagine, that he accomplished his fraudulent designs by means of a real intercourse with evil spirits. The truth probably is, that Apollonius was one of these impostors, who professed to practise magical arts, and perform other wonders, for the sake of acquiring fame, influence, and profit, among the vulgar. In this light, even according to his own biographer, he was regarded by his contemporaries, particularly by the priests of the Eleusinian and Trophonian mysteries, and by Esphrates, an Alexandrian philosopher. Lucian,⁴⁵ who lived in the time of Trajan, and Apuleius,⁴⁶ who flourished under Antoninus Pius, rank him among the most celebrated magicians. Origen, who had seen a life of Apollonius, now lost, which was written by Maragenes, prior to that of Philostratus, writes thus:⁴⁷ "Concerning magic, we shall only say, that whoever is desirous of knowing whether philosophers are to be imposed upon by this art, let him read the memoirs of Apollonius, written by Maragenes, who, though a philosopher, and not a Christian, says, that philosophers of no mean repute were deceived by the magical arts of Apollonius, and visited him as a person capable of pre-

⁴⁵ Pseudomant. t. ii. p. 529.

⁴⁶ Apolog. p. 248:

⁴⁷ Contra Celsum, l. vi. p. 311. ed Hoesch.

dicting future events." Eusebius, in his answer to Heirotides,⁴⁸ who wrote a treatise, in which he drew a comparison between Jesus Christ and Apollonius Tyanæus, speaks of the latter as a man who was eminently skilled in every kind of human wisdom, but who affected powers beyond the reach of philosophy, and assumed the Pythagorean manner of living as a mask for his impostures. The narrative of his life, by Philostratus, though, doubtless, abounding with fictions, serves at least to confirm this opinion.⁴⁹

How successfully Apollonius practised the arts of imposture, sufficiently appears from the events which followed. That dominion over the minds of men, which he found means to establish during his life, remained and increased after his death, so that he long continued to be ranked among the divinities. The inhabitants of Tyana, proud of the honour of calling him their fellow citizen, dedicated a temple to his name; and the same privileges were granted to them, as had usually been conferred upon those cities where temples were raised, and sacred rites performed, in honour of the emperors. Aurelian, out of respect to his memory, showed the Tyaneans peculiar favour.⁵⁰ Adrian took great pains to collect his writings, and preserve them in his library:⁵¹ Caracalla dedicated a temple to him, as to a divinity among men:⁵² and Alexander Severus, in his domestic temple, kept the image of Apollonius, with those of Abraham, Orpheus, and Christ, and paid them Divine honours. The common people, in the mean time, ranked Apollonius in the number of deified men, and made use of his name in incantations: and even among the philosophers of the Eclectic sect he was regarded as a being of a superior order, who partook of a middle nature between gods and men.⁵³

Of the writings ascribed to Apollonius, none remain, except his "Apology to Domitian," and his "Epistles." The former is perhaps in substance genuine, but is strongly

⁴⁸ C. 4, 5. 432. ed Olear. Conf. Plin. Hist. N. l. xxx. de Magia.

⁴⁹ Conf. Olearum in Philost. ed Lips. 1709. fol.

⁵⁰ Vopiscus in Aureliano. c. 24.

⁵¹ Phil. l. viii. c. 20.

⁵² Dio. l. lxxvii. p. 878. Lamprid. in Al. Sev. c. 29.

⁵³ Euseb. Prep. l. iv. c. 13. p. 150. Mosheim. Diss. de Apoll. ap. Observat. Hist. Crit.

marked with the sophistic manner of Philostratus. The latter abound with philosophical ideas and sentiments, and are written in a laconic style, which is a presumption in favour of their authenticity.⁵⁴

The doctrine of these epistles is for the most part Pythagoric. Apollonius appears, however, not to have adhered to the genuine system of Pythagoras concerning the nature and origin of things, according to which God and matter are primary independent principles; but to have adopted the notion of the Heraclitean school, that the primary Essence of all things, is one endued with certain properties by which it assumes various forms; and that all the varieties of nature are modifications of this universal essence, which is the first cause of all things, or God. Hence Apollonius taught, that all things arise in nature according to one necessary and immutable law, and that a wise man, being acquainted with the order of nature, can predict future events.⁵⁵ In this manner it was that Apollonius connected superstition with impiety, and made both subservient to imposture.

Concerning other philosophers of this period, who followed the Pythagorean doctrine, little remains to be related. The only names which require distinct notice are Secundus the Athenian, and Nicomachus. Secundus⁵⁶ (whom Suidas, with his usual negligence, confounds with Plinius Secundus) is said in one respect to have carried the Pythagorean discipline further than it was ever carried by any other philosopher: preserving, from the time when he commenced Pythagorean, to the end of his life, perpetual silence. He is chiefly celebrated on account of his *Sententie*,⁵⁷ or answers to questions proposed to him by the Emperor Adrian, the authenticity of which, however, there is some reason to question. They are published in Gale's *Opuscula Mythologica*. Nicomachus,⁵⁸ a native of Gerasa, in Coelo

⁵⁴ Fabric. Bibl. Gr. v. iv. p. 61.
39. 82. 90. 98. 117. 120. 133. 224. 278.

⁵⁵ Epist. Apoll. Stob. Serm.
⁵⁶ Suid. in Sec.

⁵⁷ Ed. Rom. 1638. Lugd. Bat. 1639. 12°. Fabr. B. Gr. v. xiii. p. 565.

⁵⁸ Euseb. Hist. Ec. l. vi. c. 19. Phot. Cod. 187. Fab. l. c. Suid.

* Vidend. Scheffer de Phil. Ital. c. ult. Gale Præf. ad Sent. Sexti. Gaudentius de Phil. Rom. c. 66. 73. Siberus in Sext. Lips. 1725. Voss. de Sectis, c. 21. § 8. Jons. Scrip. Hist. l. iii. c. i. 5. Suidas Bayle.

Syria, was the author of two mathematical works, *Introductio in Arithmetica*, "An Introduction to Arithmetic," and *Rachiridion Harmonicum*, "A Manual of Harmony," in which the principles of those sciences are explained upon Pythagoric principles. The exact time in which these philosophers flourished is uncertain; but there is no doubt that it was between the reigns of Augustus and Antoninus.

SECT. III.

Of the State of the Platonic Philosophy under the Roman Emperors.

THE Academic sect, which towards the close of the Roman republic had so many illustrious patrons, under the emperors, fell into general neglect; partly through the contempt with which it was treated by the Dogmatists, and partly through the reviving credit of the Sceptic sect, in which the peculiar tenets of the Middle Academy were embraced. At the same time, however, the true doctrine of Plato, which had formerly obtained such high esteem among philosophers, and which had lately been restored at Athens by Antiochus, resumed its honours. Among the *genuine followers of Plato* we find, at this period, several illustrious names.

Under the emperors Augustus and Tiberius flourished *Thrasyllus*,⁵⁹ a Mendasian. Though, according to Porphyry, he was an eminent Platonist, he so far conformed to the practice of the Pythagoreans, as to become an adept in the art of astrology. He long imposed upon the credulity of Tiberius, and enjoyed his confidence, but at last fell a sacrifice to his jealousy.⁶⁰

Cudworth. c. iv. § 14, 15. Pearson. Proleg. in Hierocl. Moshem. Diss. de Existimatione Apoll. Prideaux's Life of Apollonius. Tillamont Vit. Apol. Arpe de Talisman, p. 25. Naude Apologie, p. 238. Huet. Dem. Ev. p. ix. c. 147. § 4. Nichols's Conf. with Deist. p. iii. p. 203. Voss. de Math. p. 37. 94.

⁵⁹ Schol. Jav. Sat. vi. v. 576. Porphy. Vit. Plot. c. x. n. 9.

⁶⁰ Suet. in Tib. Tac. Annal. i. vi. c. 20.

Not long after the time of Thrasyllus lived *Theon* of Smyrna. Ptolemy, the astronomer, who flourished under Antoninus Pius, refers to his astronomical observations. His mathematical treatises, which were written on purpose to elucidate the writings of Plato, sufficiently prove, that he is to be classed in the Platonic school. At the same time, his discourses, which treat of geometry, arithmetic, music, astronomy, and the harmony of the universe, may serve to cast some light upon the Pythagorean system.⁶¹

Alcinous, whose age is uncertain, but is commonly placed about the beginning of the second century, wrote an introduction to Plato, containing a summary of his doctrine, which shews him to have been well read in his philosophy. It is translated into Latin by Ficinus; and an English version of the work is given in "Stanley's Lives of the Philosophers."⁶²

Favorinus, a native of Arles, lived in the reigns of Trajan and Adrian. The latter esteemed him highly for his learning and eloquence, and frequently disputed with him, after his usual manner, upon subjects of literature and philosophy. To many other learned men, who were inclined to do justice to their own talents, this unequal contest proved injurious, and to some even fatal: but Favorinus, who perceived that it was the emperor's foible not to endure a defeat in disputation, upon every occasion of this nature prudently ceded to the purple the triumph of conquest. One of his friends, reproaching him for having so tamely given up the point in a debate with the emperor, concerning the authority of a certain word, (for the emperor was a great philologist,) Favorinus replied, "Would you have me contest a point with the master of fifty legions?" Favorinus was instructed in the precepts of philosophy by that illustrious ornament of the Stoical school, Epictetus; but his writings, and manner of living, proved him unworthy of so excellent a master. None of his works are extant.⁶³

⁶¹ Suidas. Ptol. Math. Synt. l. ix. c. 9. l. x. c. 1. Theon. ed. Par. 1644.

⁶² Fabric. Bibl. v. iv. p. 40. Conf. v. ii. p. 42. Alcin. ed. Par. 1578. Oxon. 1687.

⁶³ Fabric. Bibl. v. iv. p. 40. Conf. v. li. p. 42. Alcin. ed. Par. 1673. Oxon. 1687. Spartian in Hadrian. c. 15. Dio. l. 69. Philostr. Vit. Soph. l. i. c. 8. § 1. Suidas. Aul. Gell. l. xi. c. 5.

Under the reign of Antoninus Pius flourished *Calvisius Taurus*,⁶⁴ of Beryta, who is mentioned as a Platonist of some note. Among his pupils was Aulus Gellius, a man of various learning, who has preserved several specimens of his preceptor's method of philosophising. He examined all sects, but preferred the Platonic: in which he had at least the merit of avoiding the infection of that spirit of confusion, which at this period seized almost the whole body of the philosophers, especially those of the Platonic school. In a work which he wrote concerning the differences in opinion among the Platonists, Aristotelians, and Stoics, he strenuously opposed the attempts of the Alexandrian philosophers, and others, to combine the tenets of these sects into one system. He wrote several pieces, chiefly to illustrate the Platonic philosophy. He lived at Athens, and taught, not in the schools, but at his table. A. Gellius, who was frequently one of his guests, and whose *Noctes Atticæ*, "Attic Evenings," are, doubtless, much indebted to these philosophical entertainments, gives the following account of the manner in which they were conducted:⁶⁵ "Taurus, the philosopher, commonly invited a select number of his friends to a frugal supper, consisting of lentils, and a gourd, cut into small pieces upon an earthen dish: and during the repast, philosophical conversation, upon various topics, was introduced. His constant disciples, whom he called his Family, were expected to contribute their share towards the small expense which attended these simple repasts, in which interesting conversation supplied the place of luxurious provision. Every one came furnished with some new subject of inquiry, which he was allowed in his turn to propose, and which, during a limited time, was debated. The subjects of discussion, in these conversations, were not of the more serious and important kind, but such elegant questions as might afford an agreeable exercise of the faculties in the moments of convivial enjoyment; and these Taurus afterwards frequently illustrated more at large with sound erudition."

⁶⁴ Suidas. Euseb. Chron. 148. Syncellus, p. 351.

⁶⁵ Noct. Att. l. vi. c. 13. Conf. l. i. c. 26. l. ii. c. 2. l. vi. c. 13. l. xii. c. 5. l. xviii. c. 8. l. xviii. c. 2.

The same period produced *Lucius Apuleius*,⁶⁶ of Medaura, a city in Africa, on the borders of Numidia and Getulia, subject to Rome. From some particulars which occur in his writings, it is probable that he lived under the Antonines. With considerable ability he united indefatigable industry, whence he became acquainted with almost the whole circle of sciences and literature. His own account of himself is, that he not only tasted of the cup of literature, under grammarians and rhetoricians at Carthage, but at Athens drank freely of the sacred fountain of poesy, the clear stream of geometry, the sweet waters of music, the rough current of dialectics, and the nectarious but unfathomable deep of philosophy; and, in short, that, with more good will indeed than genius, he paid equal homage to every muse.⁶⁷ Upon his removal to Rome, he studied the Latin tongue with so much success, that he became an eminent pleader in the Roman courts. He expended a large patrimony in his travels, which he undertook chiefly for the sake of gaining information concerning the religious rites and customs of different countries.⁶⁸ In order to repair his fortune, he married a rich widow of Oea in Africa.⁶⁹ A rumour was upon this circulated, that he had employed magical incantations to obtain her love. It was to refute this report that he wrote his *Apology*; a work replete with learning. Although it may be easily believed that this was a false accusation, Apuleius was commonly ranked among the professors of magic, and was, probably, no mean proficient in those arts of imposture which he had learned from priests of different countries. This opinion is confirmed by his Milesian fable, or the *Metamorphosis* of Lucius into an Ass, commonly known under the title of "*The Golden Ass*." Apuleius chiefly owes his celebrity to this fanciful work, in which the story of Cupid and Psyche is a curious philosophical romance. In philosophy, his principal piece is, *De Dogmate Platonis*, "*A summary View of the Doctrine of Plato*;" which may be read with great advantage, together with the *Introductions* to the Platonic system, written by

⁶⁶ *Apul. Apol.* p. 203. ed. Pet. Scriver.

⁶⁷ *Apul. Flor.* c. 18. p. 366. *Apol.* p. 190, 370. *Metamorph.* l. i. c. 5.

⁶⁸ *Apol.* p. 203. *Met.* l. iii. p. 47. l. xi. p. 177, 183.

⁶⁹ *Apul. Met.* l. ii. p. 18.

Alcinous and Albinus. Apuleius also wrote an interpretation of Aristotle's treatise *De Mundo*; "An Apology for Socrates;" and a work entitled *Florida*, which, though rather rhetorical than philosophical, serves in many particulars to illustrate the history of philosophy.⁷⁰

Another Platonist, who flourished under M. Aurelius Antoninus, was *Atticus*; chiefly memorable for the laudable pains he took to ascertain the exact points of difference between the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle. Several fragments of his work are preserved by Eusebius, in which he argues against Aristotle concerning the ultimate end of man, providence, the origin of things, the immortality of the soul, and other topics. Plotinus, in the Eclectic school, held the writings of Atticus in high estimation, and recommended them as exceedingly useful in obtaining an accurate knowledge of the Platonic system. Atticus pronounced it impossible for those who had imbibed the Peripatetic notions, to elevate their minds to a capacity of understanding and relishing the sublime conceptions of Plato.⁷¹

Numenius, of Apamea in Syria, was a writer of the same class with Atticus. Eusebius ranks him among the Platonists; and Origen and Plotinus mention him with respect: but none of his works are extant, except some fragments preserved by Eusebius.⁷²

Maximus Tyrius, though chiefly distinguished by his eloquence, has obtained some degree of celebrity as a philosopher. According to Suidas he lived under Commodus; according to Eusebius and Syncellus, under Antoninus Pius. The accounts of those chronologers may be reconciled, by supposing that Maximus flourished under Antoninus, and reached the time of Commodus. Although he was frequently at Rome, he probably spent the greater part of his time in Greece. Several writers suppose him to have been the preceptor, of whom the emperor Marcus Antoninus speaks under the name of Maximus; but it is more

⁷⁰ Apol. p. 204. 205. 216. Florid. p. 362. Fab. Bibl. Lat. t. i. p. 516. 518.

⁷¹ Syncell. p. 353. Euseb. Chron. sub. Aurel. A. 179. Prep. l. xv. c. 4. &c. Fab. Bib. Gr. v. ii. p. 64.

⁷² Porph. Vit. Plot. c. 17. Euseb. Prep. l. xi. c. 9. l. xiii. c. 5. l. xiv. c. 5. Orig. contr. Cels. l. iv. p. 204. l. v. p. 276. Conf. Clem. Alex. Strom. l. i. p. 342. Theodoret. Therap. l. ii.

probable, that this was some other philosopher of the Stoical sect. That Maximus Tyrius possessed the most captivating powers of eloquence, sufficiently appears from his elegant Dissertations : they are for the most part written upon Platonic principles, but sometimes lead towards scepticism.⁷³

To these ornaments of the Platonic school in Rome must be added two other celebrated writers, who, though they studied philosophy, are commonly ranked among the Platonists—Plutarch and Galen.

That *Plutarch*⁷⁴ ought to be admitted among the philosophers of his time, no one will doubt who is conversant with his writings. He was a native of Chæronea in Boeotia,⁷⁵ but was far from partaking of the proverbial dulness of his country. The time of his birth is not exactly known ; it is certain, however, that he flourished from the time of Nero to that of Adrian.⁷⁶ His preceptor was Ammonius, a learned philosopher, sometimes confounded with Ammonius Sacca, the father of the Eclectic sect, who lived a century later.⁷⁷

As soon as Plutarch had completed his juvenile studies he was engaged in civil affairs. He was first appointed, by a public decree, legate to the proconsul, and afterwards undertook the office of archon or prætor. The emperor Trajan, a friend to learned men, patronised him, and conferred upon him the consular dignity. Under Adrian, he was appointed procurator of Greece.⁷⁸

Civil occupations did not, however, prevent Plutarch from devoting a great part of his time to literary and philosophical studies. He both taught philosophy, and was a voluminous writer. A catalogue of his works, drawn up by his son Lamprius⁷⁹, is still extant, from which it appears,

⁷³ Max. Tyr. Diss. xi. Suidas. Euseb. Chron. M. Ant. de Scipso. l. i, § 16. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. ii. p. 23. Stollii. Hist. Ph. Mor. § 254. p. 572. edit. Heins. Lugd. Bat. 1614, 8vo. Davis, Cantab. 1703.

⁷⁴ Suid. Vit. ap. Oper. ed. Rualdi Par. 1624. D. Celer. Par. 1617.

⁷⁵ De Curios. t. ii. p. 237.

⁷⁶ Photius. Cod. 145. p. 642. Plut. de Delph. Inscr. t. i. p. 555. Apothegm. Traj. i. p. 322. Syncellus, p. 342.

⁷⁷ Jemius ad Eunap. Voss. de Sect. c. 21. § 6.

⁷⁸ Precept. de ger. Rep. t. ii. 457. Sympos. l. vi. 2. 8. t. iii. p. 289. Suidas.

⁷⁹ Vit. Demosth. t. iii. p. 91. Fabric. Bibl. Gr. v. iii. p. 633. Plat. Op. ed. Franc. 1620. Par. 1524.

that more of his pieces have been lost than have been preserved. Those of his writings which remain are a valuable treasure of ancient learning, serving to illustrate not only the Grecian and Roman affairs, but the history of philosophy. They abound with proofs of indefatigable industry and profound erudition; and, notwithstanding the harshness of the writer's style, they will always be read with pleasure, on account of the great variety of valuable and amusing information which they contain. But it is in this view chiefly that Plutarch is to be admired. In extent and variety of learning, he had few equals; but he does not appear to have excelled as much in depth and solidity of judgment. Where he expresses his own conceptions and opinions, he often supports them by feeble and slender arguments; where he reports, and attempts to elucidate, the opinions of others, he frequently falls into mistakes, or is chargeable with misrepresentation. In proof of this assertion, we may particularly mention what he had advanced concerning Plato's notion of the soul of the world, and concerning the Epicurean philosophy. To this we must add, that Plutarch is often inaccurate in method; and sometimes betrays a degree of credulity unworthy of a philosopher. On moral topics he is most successful. His didactic pieces not only abound with amusing anecdotes, but are enriched with many just and useful observations.

Plutarch appears to have derived his philosophical tenets from various sources. Aristotle was his chief guide in ethics: his doctrine of the soul he borrowed from the Egyptians, or more probably the Pythagoreans: in metaphysics, he principally followed Plato, and the Old Academy. We sometimes find him asserting with the Dogmatists, and sometimes doubting with the Pyrrhonists; but he always wages open war with the Epicureans and the Stoics. The truth seems to be, that Plutarch had not digested for himself any accurate system of opinions, and was rather a memorialist and interpreter of philosophers, than himself an eminent philosopher. He died about the fourth or fifth year of the reign of Adrian; that is, about the year 119, or 120.⁸⁰

Galen,⁸¹ whom, with Plutarch, we have ranked among

⁸⁰ Num Seni ger. Rep. t. ii. p. 448.

⁸¹ Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. v. c. ult. Suidas. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. iii. p. 509.

the Platonic philosophers, was born in the year 131, at Pergamus in Asia. In his childhood he was well instructed by his father, and other preceptors, in useful and ornamental learning. He studied philosophy, first under Caius, a Platonist, and afterwards under Albinus; whilst, at the same time, he prosecuted the study of medicine under various masters. After travelling to Corinth, Alexandria, and other places, for improvement in medical and philosophical knowledge, he began to practise surgery about the twenty-eighth year of his age. The countenance, which was at this time given to learned men by Marcus Antoninus, induced Galen to take up his residence at Rome. Here he obtained great reputation in his profession, and enjoyed the favour of the emperor, and the friendship of many illustrious Romans. He remained at Rome, excepting a few interruptions, till his death, which happened about the year 200. Galen wrote many books, not only upon medical but philosophical subjects. Among the latter are a treatise "On the best Doctrine," against Favorinus; "A Dissertation on the Opinions of Hippocrates and Plato;" "A Commentary on the Timæus of Plato," and several pieces "On Dialectics." This writer has been frequently censured for impiety; but his Demonstration of Divine Wisdom, from the structure of the human body, in his treatise *De Usu Partium Corporis Humani*, "On the Uses of the Parts of the Human Body," is sufficient refutation of this calumny.^{82*}

* Vit. ap. Op. Bas. 1562. Vit. ap. Arker. de Affectuum Cognitione, Rudolstadt. 1715. Cleric. Hist. Med. Labbei Elog. Chron. in Gal. Par. 1660.

* Vidend. Jons. de Scrip. H. Ph. l. iii. c. 3. 7. 9, 10. Vos. de Hist. Gr. l. iv. c. 10. 16. Meurs. ad Nicom. p. 166. Schmid. Diss. de Hipparchone, Theon. Sect. ii. p. 14. Voss. de Sc. Math. c. 33. § 13. Gaudent. de Phil. Rom. c. 93. Petav. Rat. Temp. l. v. c. 9. Bayle. Blount. Cens. Auth. p. 143. 170. Warb. Div. Leg. Mos. t. ii. p. 117. Mosheim. Hist. Chr. ante Constant. Sec. iii. § 91.

SECT. IV.

Of the Eclectic Sect.

UPON the foundation of the Platonic philosophy, with an abundance of heterogeneous materials collected from every other sect, was erected an irregular, cumbrous, and useless edifice, called the *Eclectic School*. The founders of this sect formed the flattering design of selecting, from the doctrines of all former philosophers, such opinions as seemed to approach nearest the truth, and combining them into one system. But, in executing this plan, they did nothing better than pile up a shapeless and incoherent mass, *rudis indigestaque moles*, not unlike that chaos, which they admitted as an essential article in their doctrine of nature. In some particulars, indeed, they attempted to adorn and enrich the system with fancies of their own; but with what little success, will sufficiently appear in the sequel.

The Eclectic sect took its rise at Alexandria, in Egypt; a country which, in more remote periods, had admitted foreign dogmas, and superstitions, particularly after the invasion of the Persians. Egypt having, in consequence of the conquests of Alexander, become a part of the Grecian empire, the Egyptian priests accommodated themselves, not only to the laws and manners, but even to the speculative tenets of their conquerors. That they might not appear inferior to the Greeks in learning, they affected to admire and adopt their philosophy. The Pythagoric and Platonic systems, especially, gained an easy admission into the Egyptian schools, on account of the respect which they paid to religion, and the opportunities which they afforded of reconciling vulgar superstitions, and vernacular traditions, with systematic science.

The confusion of opinions, which arose from this cause, was doubtless increased by the promiscuous concourse of strangers, who, at this period, flocked from all quarters to Alexandria, bringing with them, from their respective countries, their different tenets in philosophy and religion. And the evil was aggravated by the return of a body of Alexandrian philosophers, who, under the troublesome and oppressive reign of Ptolemy Physcon, had been dispersed

through Asia,⁸² and who had there learned a new species of oriental philosophy, chiefly derived from the Persian Zoroaster, which they found it not difficult to incorporate with the doctrines of Plato and Pythagoras.

The present state of the several Grecian sects was, in no small degree, favourable to the coalescing plan of the Eclectic philosophy. The Dogmatists had now so long engaged in undecided contests, as sufficiently to betray their weakness to their common adversaries, the Academics and Sceptics. Scepticism, on the other side, was seen to contradict the common sense and experience of mankind, and to threaten the world with universal uncertainty and confusion. In these circumstances, nothing could be more natural, than the design of separating from each former system its purest and best-supported tenets, and forming them into a new institute of philosophy, in which truth might be seen under a fairer and more perfect form, than she had hitherto been able to assume.

The Christian religion, too, which had now found its way to Alexandria, became incidentally the occasion of encouraging and promoting this coalition of opinions. For when the Heathen philosophers perceived that this new establishment, supported by the splendour of its miracles, and the purity of its doctrines, was daily gaining credit even in the schools of Alexandria; and saw that, like the rising sun, it was likely soon to eclipse every inferior light; despairing of being able either to refute its claims by argument, or to stem its progress by authority, they determined to oppose it by every effort of ingenuity and artifice. In order to support the declining credit of their own schools, they incorporated Christian ideas and principles into their new system. Several fathers of the Christian church themselves, such as Pantænus, Clemens Alexandrinus, and the author of the work called "The Shepherd of Hermas," by studying philosophy in the Alexandrian school, injudiciously favoured the views of their opponents, and from their sacred magazine contributed their share towards that confused mass of opinions, Egyptian, Oriental, Pythagoric, Platonic, and Christian, which, about the close of the second century, rose up into the *Eclectic System*.

⁸² Athæn. l. iv. p. 184. Conf. Justin. l. xxxviii. c. 9.

The Eclectic sect is not commonly known among ancient writers under any distinct name, for this obvious reason, that its most celebrated supporters choose rather to pass themselves upon the world as Platonists, than to assume a new title; but, that the sect really existed as such, no one, who attends to the facts by which its rise and progress are marked, can entertain a doubt.⁸²

The first projector of this plan appears to have been *Potamo*, a Platonist. The practice of philosophising eclectically was indeed known long before his time. It had been formerly adopted, as we have seen by several of the leaders of the Greek sects, particularly Plato, Zeno, and Aristotle; it had been not uncommon among the Alexandrian philosophers from the commencement of their schools; and it was followed, in the period of which we are now treating, by Plutarch, Pliny, Galen, and others. But Potamo appears to have been the first who attempted to institute a new sect upon this principle. Diogenes Laertius relates,⁸³ "that not long before he wrote his *Lives of the Philosophers*, an Eclectic sect, ἐκλεκτὴ τις διὰσεως, had been introduced by Potamo of Alexandria, who selected tenets from every former sect." He then proceeds to quote a few particulars of his system from his Eclectic institutes, respecting the principles of reasoning, and certain general topics of philosophical inquiry; from which nothing further can be learned, than that Potamo endeavoured to reconcile the precepts of Plato with those of other masters. As nothing remains concerning this philosopher besides the brief account just referred to in Laertius, an obscure passage in Suidas,⁸⁴ and another, still more obscure, Porphyry,⁸⁵ it is probable that his attempt to institute a school upon the Eclectic plan proved unsuccessful. The time when Potamo flourished is uncertain. Suidas places him under Augustus; but it is more probable, from the account of Laertius, that he began his undertaking about the close of the second century.

The complete constitution of the Eclectic sect must be

⁸² Vid. Olearii Diss. de Sect. Ecol. ap. Stanley's *Lives of Phil.* et Mosheim. Diss. Hist. Eccl. p. 86.

⁸³ Proem. sub. fin.

⁸⁴ Suidas in *Aspery* t. i. p. 656. et in *Potam.* t. iii. p. 161.

⁸⁵ Vit. Plot. c. ix. p. 108. Bipl. Gr. Fabr. vol. iv. p. 108. Olear. Diss. de Ph. Eccl. § 2.

referred to *Ammonius*, surnamed, from the kind of life which he followed, *Sacca*. If Plotinus attended both upon his lectures and those of Potamo, as Porphyry intimates, Ammonius flourished about the beginning of the third century. He was born of Christian parents, and was early instructed in the catechetical schools established at Alexandria. Here, under the Christian preceptors, Athenagoras, Pantoenus, and Clemens Alexandrinus, by whom this school was successively conducted, and who themselves united Gentile philosophy with Christian doctrine, he acquired a strong propensity towards philosophical studies, and became exceedingly desirous of reconciling the different opinions which at that time subsisted among philosophers.⁸⁸

Porphyry relates,⁸⁹ that Ammonius passed over to the legal establishment, that is, apostatised to the Pagan religion. Eusebius,⁹⁰ and Jerom,⁹¹ on the contrary, assert, that Ammonius continued in the Christian faith to the end of his life. But it is probable that these Christian fathers refer to another Ammonius, who, in the third century, wrote a *Harmony of the Gospels*, or to some other person of this name: for they refer to the sacred books of Ammonius; whereas Ammonius Sacca, as his pupil Longinus attests, wrote nothing.⁹² It is not easy to account for the particulars related of this philosopher, but upon the supposition of his having renounced the Christian faith. It seems improbable, that a Christian would have accepted the chair in a Pagan school, or would have been followed by disciples, who waged perpetual war against Christianity. That he was well acquainted with the Christian doctrine, and endeavoured to incorporate it into his system, will, however, be readily admitted.

According to Hierocles, Ammonius was induced to execute the plan of a distinct Eclectic school, by a desire of putting an end to those contentions which had so long distracted the philosophical world. "Animosities," says Hierocles,⁹³ "having hitherto existed among the Plato-

⁸⁸ Suidas in Ammon. t. i. p. 143. in Plot. t. iii. p. 133. Bayle.

⁸⁹ Apud. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. vi. c. 19.

⁹⁰ L. c. p. 221.

⁹¹ De S. E. c. iv. p. 152. Bib. Eccl. Fabr.

⁹² Compare Fabric. Bib. Gr. v. iv. p. 160, 172. Batt. Défense de S. Peres, l. i. c. 3. Lardner's Credibility, Part. c. 88.

⁹³ De Fato ap. Phot. Cod. 214. 151.

nists, Aristotelians, and other philosophers, which were at this time carried to such a height, that they did not scruple to corrupt the writings of their leaders, in order to furnish themselves with weapons of defence: Ammonius, a man divinely instructed, abandoning the controversies which had so long disgraced philosophy, and clearing away the superfluities of each system, demonstrated that, in certain great and necessary points, the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle were perfectly harmonious, and thus delivered to his disciples an institution of philosophy free from dispute." How far the system, which Ammonius and his followers framed, deserved the praise which Hierocles bestows upon it, will afterwards appear.

Ammonius had many eminent followers and hearers, both Pagan and Christian, who all, doubtless, promised themselves much illumination from a preceptor, who undertook to collect into a focus all the rays of ancient wisdom. He taught his select disciples certain sublime doctrines, and mystical practices, and was called *ἑσδοκαστής*, the heaven-taught philosopher. These mysteries were communicated to them under a solemn injunction of secrecy. Porphyry relates,⁹⁴ that Plotinus, with the rest of the disciples of Ammonius, promised, not to divulge certain dogmas which they learned in his school, but to lodge them safely in their purged minds. This circumstance accounts for the fact, already mentioned on the authority of Longinus, that he left nothing in writing. Ammonius probably died about the year 243.⁹⁵

Among those disciples of Ammonius, who were admitted to the knowledge of his mysteries, were Herennius, Origenes, Longinus, and Plotinus.

Herennius and *Origenes*⁹⁶ are memorable for nothing, except their infidelity to their master, in violating their promise by divulging the secrets of his school. This Origenes must not be confounded with Origen, the celebrated teacher of the Christian church in Alexandria; for the former was a Pagan, and seems to have written only two small treatises, which are now lost; whereas the latter rose

⁹⁴ L. c. c. 3.

⁹⁵ Jons. de Scr. Hist. Ph. l. iii. c. 3. p. 282.

⁹⁶ Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. iii. p. 120. Porph. l. c. c. 2.

to great distinction among the Christian fathers, and was the author of many valuable works.

Dionysius Longinus,⁹⁷ a native of Emesa, in Syria, was instructed by Cornelius Fronto, a nephew of Plutarch, in rhetoric, and afterwards became his heir. Whilst he was young he visited several celebrated seats of the muses, particularly Athens, Alexandria, and Rome, and attended upon the most eminent masters in language, eloquence, and philosophy. He was a great admirer of Plato,⁹⁸ and honoured his memory with an annual festival.⁹⁹ He chiefly followed the Eclectic system of Ammonius. So extensive and profound was his erudition, that he was called the living library.¹⁰⁰ It is much to be regretted, that none of the writings of this celebrated scholar are extant, except one piece, which will be an eternal monument of his genius and taste, "A Treatise on the Sublime." Longinus was preceptor in the Greek language to Zenobia, queen of Palmyra; and, having been admitted to her counsels, shared her fortunes. That princess being conquered and taken prisoner by the Emperor Aurelian, in the year 273, her minister, was, by the emperor's command, put to death.¹ Longinus had seen the Jewish scriptures; he quotes a passage from the writings of Moses, as an example of the Sublime; "and God said, Let there be light, and there was light."²

The school of Ammonius was continued, and the Eclectic system completed, by the most celebrated of his disciples, Plotinus, the chief of the Alexandrian Platonists, from whom the school afterwards took its name. For our knowledge of the history and opinions of this philosopher, we may depend almost entirely upon the authority of Porphyry, who must, indeed, have been well acquainted with the particulars of his life, having enjoyed an inti-

⁹⁷ Suidas. Porph. Vit. Plot. c. xx. c. xiv.

⁹⁸ Euseb. Prep. l. x. c. 3.

⁹⁹ The common reading in Eusebius is *Martius*, but we think, with Fabricius, * that the passage should be read *Martonia*, for it is not probable that Longinus, who was contemporary with Plotinus, and wrote against him, should observe a festival in honour of his memory. Longinus survived Plotinus only a few years.

* Bibl. Gr. v. iv. p. 436.

¹⁰⁰ Eunapii Vit. Sophist. p. 14.

¹ Vopiscus in Aurel. c. 30.

² Gen. i. 3.

mate friendship with him for many years; but whose partiality for his sect, and propensity to fiction, will not suffer us to allow him implicit credit.³ The probable truth with respect to this philosopher is as follows:—

Plotinus was born at Lycopolis, in Egypt, in the year 205. Concerning his parents, family, and early education, nothing is known. About the age of twenty years, he began to apply to the study of philosophy. After attending lectures in the different schools with which Alexandria at this time abounded, he attached himself to Ammonius, and continued to prosecute his philosophical studies under this master eleven years; probably because he found in Ammonius a disposition towards superstition and fanaticism similar to his own. Upon the death of his preceptor, having in his school frequently heard the Oriental philosophy commended, and expected to find in it that kind of doctrine concerning Divine natures, which he was most desirous of studying, he determined to travel into Persia and India, to learn wisdom of the magi and Gymnosophists. In this design he was probably encouraged by the success of Apollonius Tyanæus, whose magic arts, said to have been derived from these sources, had obtained him universal fame. It happened opportunely, that the emperor Gordian was, at this time, undertaking an expedition against the Parthians. Plotinus seized the occasion, and, in the year 243, joined the emperor's army. The affairs of Gordian proving unfortunate, and the emperor himself being killed, the philosopher fled, not without hazard, to Antioch; and afterwards came to Rome, where the purple was now possessed by Philip.

For some time Plotinus was prevented from laying open the stores of wisdom which he had collected, by the oath of secrecy which he had taken in the school of Ammonius: but, after his fellow disciples, Herennius and Origenes, had disclosed the mysteries of their master, he thought himself no longer bound by his promise, and became a public preceptor in philosophy, upon Eclectic principles. During a period of ten years, he confined himself entirely to oral discourse; always conversing freely with his disciples, who

³ Conf. Porph. Vit. Plotin. ap. Fab. Eunap. p. 1. Suidas in Porph. t. iii. p. 133.

were very numerous, and encouraging them to start difficulties, and propose questions, upon every subject. At last he found it necessary, for his own convenience and that of his pupils, to commit the substance of his lectures to writing. Many volumes of metaphysics, dialectics, and ethics, thus produced with haste and inaccuracy in the midst of various engagements, were suffered to pass into the hands of his pupils without being transcribed. This may in part account for the great obscurity and confusion, which are still found in these writings, after all the pains that Porphyry took to correct them. These books, which are fifty-four in number, are distributed under six classes, called *Enneads*. Proclus wrote commentaries upon them, and Dexippus defended them against the *Peripatetics*.⁴

Although the novelty of the plan of instruction, which Plotinus followed, brought him many hearers, through the obscurity and subtlety of his doctrine he had but few disciples. Nothing could exceed the assiduity with which he taught those who were willing to become his followers, or the ardour with which he himself applied to philosophical speculations. It was his frequent practice, to prepare himself for his sublime contemplations by watching and fasting. In such high reputation was Plotinus for wisdom, that many private quarrels were referred to his arbitration, and parents, upon their death-beds, often sent for him, to intrust him with the charge of their children. He resided twenty-six years at Rome, where he enjoyed the friendship of many persons of high rank, and particularly of the emperor Galienus. The use which Plotinus made of his interest with that prince was a memorable proof of the romantic turn of his mind. He requested the emperor to rebuild a city in Campania, which had been formerly rased, and to grant it, with the neighbouring territory, to a body of philosophers, who should be governed by the laws of Plato, and should call the city *Platonopolis*; at the same time promising, that he himself, with his friends, would lay the foundation of this philosophical colony. The emperor was himself inclined to listen to the proposal, but was dissuaded by his friends.

It was another proof of the fanatical spirit of Plotinus, that, though well skilled in the medical art, he had such a

⁴ Fabricius, v. iv. p. 164.

contempt for the body, that he could never be prevailed upon to make use of any means to cure the diseases to which his constitution was subject, or to alleviate his pain. He had learned from Pythagoras and Plato, that the soul is sent into the body for the punishment of its former sins, and must in this prison pass through a severe servitude, before it can be sufficiently purified to return to the Divine fountain from which it flowed. Such was his contempt of the corporeal vehicle in which his soul was inclosed, that he would never suffer the day of his birth to be celebrated, or any portrait to be taken of his person. Amelius, one of his pupils, however, desirous of obtaining a picture of his master, introduced a painter, named Casterius, into the school, which any one was at liberty to visit, in hopes that, by attentively observing his features, he might be able to delineate the likeness from memory. This the painter accomplished with great success; and Amelius became possessed of a portrait of Plotinus without his knowledge.

By his rigorous abstinence, and determined neglect of his health, Plotinus, at last, brought himself into a state of disease and infirmity, which rendered the latter part of his life exceedingly painful. Forsaken by his friends, excepting only Eustochius (for Porphyry was at that time in Sicily), he left Rome, and retired into Campania, to the estate of Zethus, one of his former disciples, now deceased. By the hospitality of the heirs of this old friend, Plotinus was supported till his death. When he found his end approaching, he said to Eustochius, "The Divine principle within me is now hastening to unite itself with that Divine Being which animates the universe:" herein expressing a leading principle of his philosophy, that the human soul is an emanation from the Divine nature, and will return to the source whence it proceeded. Plotinus died in the year 270, aged sixty-six years.

Porphyry, in relating the life of Plotinus, represents him as having been possessed of miraculous powers, similar to those which he ascribes to Pythagoras, and doubtless with the same artful design: but the characters of fiction are so strongly marked upon the whole narrative, that, after what has been already said concerning the marvellous parts of the history of Pythagoras, and of Apollonius

Tyanæus, it is wholly unnecessary to allow those of Plotinus further notice in the history of philosophy.

From the life and writings of this philosopher it clearly appears, that he belonged to the class of fanatics. His natural temper, his education, his system, all inclined him to fanaticism. Suffering himself to be led astray, by a volatile imagination, from the plain path of good sense, he poured forth crude and confused conceptions, in obscure⁵ and incoherent language. Sometimes he soared, in extatic flights, into the regions of mysticism. Porphyry relates,⁶ that he ascended through all the Platonic steps of Divine contemplation, to the actual vision of the Deity himself, and was admitted to such intercourse with him, as no other philosopher ever enjoyed. They who are well acquainted with human nature will easily perceive, in these flights, unequivocal proofs of a feeble or disordered mind, and will not wonder that the system of Plotinus was mystical, and his writings obscure. The truth seems to be, that this philosopher made it the main scope and end of his life to dazzle his own mind, and the minds of others, with the meteors of enthusiasm, rather than to illuminate them with the clear and steady rays of truth. How much is it to be regretted, that such a man should have become, in a great degree, the preceptor of the world, and should, by means of his disciples, have every where disseminated a species of false philosophy, which was compounded of superstition, enthusiasm, and imposture! The muddy waters, sent forth from this polluted spring, were spread through the most celebrated seats of learning, and were even permitted, as we shall afterwards see, to mingle with the pure stream of Christian doctrine.

Not only at Rome, where Plotinus had taught, but first in Alexandria, afterwards in many of the principal cities of Asia Minor, and even at Athens, the ancient seat of wisdom, the system of Ammonius and Plotinus was embraced and propagated by men, who, in learning and abilities, were greatly superior to its founders. We shall trace the progress of the Plotinian, or Eclectic, school through a long series of Pagan professors, reserving to a subsequent part of the work the consideration of its influence upon the opinions of Christian writers.

⁵ Vid. Eunap. p. 17.

⁶ L. c. c. 13. 15. 23.

Amelius,⁷ a Tuscan, who in his youth had been instructed in philosophy by Lysimachus, a Stoic, and who had, in the course of his studies, acquired a great fondness for the writings of Plato, in the year 246 became a pupil of Plotinus. His master found his talents and taste so similar to his own, that he soon admitted him to his friendship, and employed him in writing solutions of questions proposed to him by his disciples, and refutations of the objections and calumnies of his enemies. He had been eighteen years with Plotinus, when Porphyry entered the school, and probably assisted him in studying the doctrine of their master.⁸ Before the death of Plotinus, he retired to Apamea, where he survived his master a few years.

Among the most celebrated preceptors of the Plotinian school, and the Alexandrian sect, is *Porphyry*, a learned and zealous supporter of Pagan theology, and an inveterate enemy to the Christian faith. Porphyry⁹ was, as we learn from himself, a Tyrian.¹⁰ He was born in the year 233.¹¹ His father very early introduced him to the study of literature and philosophy under the Christian preceptor Origen, probably whilst he was teaching at Cæsarea in Palestine.¹² His juvenile education was completed at Athens by Longinus, whose high reputation for learning and genius brought him pupils from many

⁷ Porph. Vit. Plot. c. 7. &c. Suidas. Fab. Bib. Gr. v. ii. p. 406. Eunap. l. c.

⁸ Suidas has probably no other ground for saying that Porphyry was a disciple of Amelius.

⁹ Eunap. Vit. Soph. p. 17. Suidas in Porph. t. iii. p. 158. Diss. de Vita Porph. Rom. 1630. 8vo. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. iv. p. 107. Porph. Vit. Plot. c. viii. 197.

¹⁰ Jerom* and Chrysostom† call Porphyry a Batanean: whence some have supposed, † that he was born in the country of Basan, a part of Trachonites, in Palestine. It is more probable|| that Batanea was a part of Syria bordering upon Tyre, in which a colony of Tyrians had settled‡ and if this was the place of Porphyry's birth, he might chuse rather to call himself a Tyrian, than to derive his appellation from an obscure region.

¹¹ Ib. c. 4.

¹² Euseb. Ecc. H. l. iii. c. 19.

* Pref. Epist. ad Galat.

† Hom. vi. in 1 Cor. p. 58.

‡ Cæa. Baron. ad A. C. 325. Le Moyne ad var. Sac. t. ii. p. 607.

|| Stephan. in Ethnicis. Fabric. Bibl. Gr. v. iv. p. 181.

distant countries. Under this excellent instructor he gained an extensive acquaintance with antiquity, improved his taste in literature, and enlarged his knowledge of the Plotinian philosophy. It is, doubtless, in a great measure to be ascribed to Longinus, that we find so many proofs of erudition, and so much elegance of style, in the writings of Porphyry.¹³

From this time, we have little information concerning this philosopher, till we find him, about the thirtieth year of his age, becoming, at Rome, a disciple of Plotinus, who had before this time acquired great fame as a teacher of philosophy.¹⁴ Porphyry was six years a diligent student of the Eclectic system; and became so entirely attached to his master, and so perfectly acquainted with his doctrine, that Plotinus esteemed him one of the greatest ornaments of his school, and frequently employed him in refuting the objections of his opponents, and in explaining to his younger pupils the more difficult parts of his writings: he even entrusted him with the charge of methodizing and correcting his works.¹⁵ the fanatical spirit of philosophy, to which Porphyry addicted himself, concurred with his natural propensity towards melancholy to produce a resolution, which he formed about the thirty-sixth year of his age, of putting an end to his life; purposing hereby, according to the Platonic doctrine, to release his soul from her wretched prison, the body. From this mad design he was, however, dissuaded by his master, who advised him to divert his melancholy by taking a journey to Sicily, to visit his friend Probus, an accomplished and excellent man, who lived near Lilybæum. Porphyry followed the advice of Plotinus, and recovered the vigour and tranquillity of his mind.¹⁶

After the death of Plotinus, Porphyry, still remaining in Sicily, appeared as an open and implacable adversary to the Christian religion.¹⁷ Some have maintained, that in his youth he had been a Christian; but of this there is no sufficient proof. It is not improbable that, whilst he was a boy, under the care of Origen, he gained some acquaint-

¹³ Vit. Plot. c. 21.

¹⁴ Vit. Plot. c. 4, 5.

¹⁵ C. vii. 13. 20.

¹⁶ Vit. Plot. c. 11. Eunap. p. 14.

¹⁷ Euseb. and Hier. Conf. Lactant. l. v. c. 2.

ance with the Jewish and Christian scriptures. He wrote fifteen distinct treatises against Christianity, which the emperor Theodosius ordered to be destroyed: an injudicious act of zeal, which the real friends of Christianity, no less than its enemies, will always regret; for truth can never suffer by a fair and full discussion; and falsehood and calumny must always, in the issue, serve the cause they are designed to injure. The spirit of those writings of Porphyry, which are lost, may be, in some measure, apprehended from the fragments which are preserved by ecclesiastical historians. Many able advocates for Christianity appeared upon this occasion, the principal of whom were Methodius, Apollinaris, and Eusebius.¹⁸ So vehement and lasting was the indignation which was excited against the memory of Porphyry, that Constantine, in order to cast the severest possible censure upon the Arian sect, published an edict,¹⁹ ranking them among the professed enemies of Christianity, and requiring that they should, from that time, be branded with the name of Porphyrians.

Porphyry, after remaining many years in Sicily, returned to Rome, and taught the doctrines of Plotinus; pretending to be not only a philosopher, endued with superior wisdom, but a Divine person, favoured with supernatural communications from heaven. He himself relates,²⁰ that in the sixty-eighth year of his age, he was in a sacred extacy, in which he saw the Supreme Intelligence, the God who is superior to all gods, without an image. This vision Augustine²¹ supposes to have an illusion of some evil spirit: we are rather inclined to believe it to have been the natural effect of a heated imagination; unless, indeed, it be added to the long list of fictions, with which the writings of Porphyry abound. He died about the year 304. Of his numerous works, the only pieces which have escaped the depredations of time (except sundry fragments, dispersed through various authors), are his "Life of Pythagoras;" a book "On the Cave of the Nymphs in Homer;" "Homeric Questions;" "A Fragment on the Stygian Lake;" "An

¹⁸ Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. iv. p. 197. et Syllab. Script. de Ver. Ch. Rel. c. 3.

¹⁹ Socrat. Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 9.

²⁰ Vit. Plot. c. 23.

²¹ De Civ. Dei. l. x. c. 10.

Epistle to Anebo, an Egyptian Priest; "A Treatise on the Five Predicables," commonly prefixed to the logical works of Aristotle; "Thoughts on Intelligibles;" "A Treatise on Abstinence from Animal Food;" and "The Life of Plotinus," which contains also memoirs of Porphyry himself.²²

Porphyry was, it must be owned, a writer of deep erudition; and, had his judgment and integrity been equal to his learning, he would have deserved a distinguished place among the ancients. But neither the splendour of his diction, nor the variety of his reading, can atone for the credulity, or the dishonesty, which filled the narrative parts of his works with so many extravagant tales, or interest the judicious reader in the abstruse subtleties, and mystical flights, in his philosophical writings.

The Alexandrian philosophy had, after Porphyry, many learned and able defenders. Among these, one of the most celebrated was his immediate successor, *Jamblichus*,²³ a native of Chalcis in Cælo-Syria. He flourished, as may be inferred from the age of his preceptor, Porphyry, about the beginning of the fourth century. His first instructor was Anatolius, who presided in a Peripatetic school in Alexandria; but he soon left this school, and became a disciple of Porphyry. He became perfect master of all the mysteries of the Plotinian system, and taught it with such credit and success, that disciples crowded to his school from various quarters. Though he fell short of Porphyry in eloquence, he won the affections of his followers by the freedom with which he conversed with them upon philosophy, and was, at the same time, careful to excite admiration, and command their reverence, by high pretensions to theurgical powers. He astonished them with wonders, which he professed to perform by means of an intercourse with invisible beings. Hence he was called, The Most Divine and Wonderful Teacher.

The writings of Jamblichus discover extensive reading; but his style is so deficient in accuracy and elegance, that even his encomiast, Eunapius, acknowledges it more likely to disgust than to allure the reader. He borrows freely

²² Fabric. Bib. Gr. v. iv. p. 180.

²³ Eunap. Vit. Soph. Fabr. ib. p. 282.

from other writers, particularly Porphyry, without the smallest acknowledgment. His philosophical works are exceedingly obscure, but are valuable as authentic documents respecting the Alexandrian school. "The Life of Pythagoras;" "An Exhortation to the Study of Philosophy;" "Three Books on Mathematical Learning;" "A Commentary upon Nicomachus's Institutes of Arithmetic;" and "A Treatise on the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Assyrians," are all the writings of Jamblichus now extant.²⁴ The time and place of his death are uncertain; but, from a passage of Eunapius, in which he says, that his disciple Sopater went, after his master's death, to the court of Constantine, it appears probable that Jamblichus died before that emperor, that is, about the year 333. This Jamblichus must be distinguished from the person of the same name, to whom the emperor Julian dedicates his epistles; for Julian was scarcely born at the time when Porphyry's successor died.

The school of Jamblichus produced many Eclectic philosophers, who were dispersed through various parts of the Roman empire. But the fate of one of their number, Sopater, who was put to death by order of the emperor, probably for insidious practices against the peace of the state, and the discredit into which the Pagan theology was now, through the general spread of Christianity, almost universally fallen, induced these philosophers to propagate their tenets, and practise their mysteries, with caution and concealment.²⁵ In this state of depression the sect continued through the reigns of Constantine and Constantius. But under the emperor Julian, who apostatised from the Christian faith, the Alexandrian sect revived, and again flourished in great vigour. Many pretenders arose, who, under the cloak of philosophy, practised magical deceptions with great success, and industriously disseminated mysticism and enthusiasm. Their biographer is Eunapius, a writer of the same school, who relates, and seems to have credited, many marvellous stories.

The immediate successor of Jamblichus was *Edesius*,²⁶ of Cappadocia. After the example of his master, he pre-

²⁴ Fab. Bib. Gr. v. iv. p. 289. Ed. Gale, Ox. 1678. Kuster, Amst. 1707.

²⁵ Sozomen. Hist. Ecc. l. i. c. 5.

²⁶ Eunap. p. 34.

tended to supernatural communications with the Deity, and practised theurgic arts. Among the wonderful events which are said to have happened to him, one of the most ludicrous is, that, in answer to his prayers, his future fate was revealed to him in hexameter verses, which suddenly appeared upon the palm of his left hand. Towards the close of his life, he left his school in Cappadocia to the care of his disciple and friend *Eustathius*, and removed to Pergamus, where he had a numerous train of followers. Of *Eustathius*, his wife *Sosipatra*, and his son *Antoninus*, several tales are related by *Eunapius*, which only serve to expose the fraud of these pretended philosophers, and the credulity of their biographer.²⁷

Eusebius, of Myndus in Caria,²⁸ though one of the disciples *Ædesius*, appears, from a conference which he had with *Julian*, to have considered all pretensions to intercourse with demons, or inferior divinities, as illusions of the fancy, or tricks of imposture; and to have discouraged them, as unworthy of the purity and sublimity of true philosophy. His design seems to have been, to restore the contemplation of Intelligibles, or Ideas, as the only real and immutable natures, according to the doctrine of *Porphyry*, and of *Plato* himself: but the fanatical doctrine of an intercourse between demons and men, and the arts of theurgy founded upon this doctrine, were now too generally established, and found too useful, to be dismissed. *Eusebius* of Myndus was therefore less acceptable to the emperor *Julian* than another disciple of *Ædesius*, *Maximus* of Ephesus.

Maximus, according to *Eunapius*,²⁹ was, through the recommendation of his master, appointed by *Constantius* preceptor to *Julian*: according to the Christian historians, he introduced himself to *Julian*, during his Asiatic expedition, at *Nicomedia*. By accommodating his predictions to the wishes and hopes of the emperor, and by other parasitical arts, he gained entire possession of his confidence. The courtiers, as usual, followed the example of their master, and *Maximus* was daily loaded with new honours.

²⁷ *Eunap.* p. 50, &c. Conf. *Ammian. Marc. l. xx.—xxii.*

²⁸ *Eunap.* p. 86, &c.

²⁹ *L. c. Socrat. Hist. Ecc. l. iii. c. 1. Nicephor. l. x. c. 1.*

He accompanied Julian in his expedition into Persia, and there, by the assistance of divination and flattery, persuaded him, that he would rival Alexander in the glory of conquest. The event, however, proved as unfortunate to the philosopher as to the hero; for Julian being slain in battle, after the short reign of Jovian, Maximus fell under the displeasure of the emperors Valentinian and Valens, and, for the imaginary crime of magic, underwent a long course of confinement and suffering, which was not the less truly persecution, because they were inflicted upon a Pagan. At last Maximus was sent into his native country, and there fell a sacrifice to the cruelty of the proconsul Festus.³⁰

To the list of Eclectic philosophers, who enjoyed the patronage of the emperor Julian, must be added *Priscus*, of Thesprotium, who also accompanied him into Persia; and *Chrysanthius*, of Sardis, appointed by Julian high priest of Lydia, who was supposed to possess a power of conversing with the gods, and of predicting future events.³¹

The emperor *Julian* is generally acknowledged to have been not only a patron of philosophers, but himself a philosopher. Referring to the civil historians³² for the particulars of his political conduct, we shall mention such incidents as more immediately respect his philosophical character.

Julian, in the early part of his life, was carefully instructed in literature and science by Christian preceptors.³³ Whilst he was pursuing his studies at Nicomedia, his uncle Constantius strictly charged him not to attend upon the lectures of the celebrated Pagan Sophist, Libanius. This prohibition had no other effect, than to awaken the young man's curiosity, and kindle an earnest desire of visiting the Pagan schools. Notwithstanding every precaution, he conversed freely with philosophers, and grew fond of the fanciful system taught by the Alexandrian Platonists. His natural disposition, which was tinged with enthusiasm, favoured this attachment; and it was confirmed by the in-

³⁰ Amm. Marcell. l. xxix. c. 1. Socr. et Nicoph. l. c. Theodoret. Hist. Ecc. l. ii. c. 27.

³¹ Eunap. p. 144, &c. Suidas.

³² Amm. Marcell. Victor. Zosimus. Libanius in Orat. &c.

³³ Socr. l. iii. c. 1. 23. Sozomen. l. vi. c. 2. Liban. § 5. ap. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. vii. p. 228.

timacy which, during his residence at Nicomedia, he formed with Maximus at Ephesus. Under his instructions, and those of Chrysanthius and others, he became a great proficient in the abstruse speculations, and in the theurgic arts of this school.³⁴ With the permission of his uncle, he finished his studies at Athens; where he acquired great reputation in learning and philosophy, and was initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries.³⁵

When Julian was called by Constantius to exchange the school of philosophy for the field of war, he made great use of the magic arts, which he had learned from Maximus, in executing his political purposes. Whilst he was at Vienna, he reported that, in the middle of the night, he had been visited by a celestial form, which had, in heroic verse; promised him the possession of the imperial dignity.³⁶

As soon as Julian reached the summit of his wishes, he employed his power in restoring the heathen superstitions.³⁷ He at this time, however, used no violent measures to compel the Christians to forsake their religion; rightly judging, that "false opinions can never be corrected by fire and sword."³⁸ His principal favourites were the Pagan philosophers of the school of Ædesius; but learned men of every class were encouraged in his court. When he afterwards shut up the Christian schools, it was in hopes of suppressing the Christian religion, by involving its professors in ignorance and barbarism.³⁹

This prince not only encouraged letters by his patronage, but was himself a learned writer. It is easy to perceive, from a slight inspection of his works, that he strictly adhered to the Alexandrian or Eclectic school. He professes himself a warm admirer of Pythagoras and Plato, and recommends a union of their tenets with those of Aristotle.⁴⁰ The latter Platonists, of his own period, he loads with encomiums, particularly Jamblichus, whom he calls, The

³⁴ Eunap. p. 83. Amm. Marc. l. xxv. c. 6. l. xxi. c. 1. l. xxii. c. 12. l. xxiii. c. 2. 5. 11. Liban. ib. § 9, 10.

³⁵ Sozomen. l. v. c. 2. Soc. l. iii. c. 1. Liban. § 13. p. 233. 238.

³⁶ Liban. § 34. p. 260. Amm. Marc. l. xxi. c. 2.

³⁷ Sozom. l. v. c. 3, 16. Am. M. l. xxv. c. 6. Greg. Naz. Orat. iii. adv. Jul.

³⁸ Lib. § 58. p. 256.

³⁹ Amm. M. l. xxii. c. 10. Jul. Epist. 42. Fab. Bib. Gr. v. vi. p. 77.

⁴⁰ Orat. Jul. in Cynic. p. 188. Orat. v. in Mat. Deor. p. 162.

Light of the World, and, the Physician of the Mind.* Amidst the numerous traces of an enthusiastic and bigoted attachment to Pagan theology and philosophy, and of an inveterate enmity to Christianity,⁴⁰ which are to be found in his writings, the candid reader will discern many marks of genius and erudition.⁴¹

Concerning the manners of Julian, Libanius writes, that no philosopher, in the lowest state of poverty, was ever more temperate, or more ready to practise rigorous abstinence from food, as the means of preparing his mind for conversing with the gods.⁴² Like Plotinus, Porphyry, Jamblichus, and others of this fanatical sect, he dealt in visions and extacies, and pretended to a supernatural intercourse with divinities. Suidas relates, probably from some writings of the credulous Eunapius now lost, an oracular prediction concerning his death.⁴³

His philosophical character attended him in his military exploits, and accompanied him to the last. After he had received his mortal wound, he held a conference with the philosophers Maximus and Priscus concerning the soul, in the midst of which he expired, in the thirty-second year of his age.

On the whole, although the emperor Julian must not be denied the place which has long been allowed him among philosophers, it must be owned, that his philosophy was neither able to preserve him from superstition and enthusiasm, nor to raise his mind above the influence of the narrowest and most pernicious prejudices.

We must not, in this place, omit the biographer of the *Ædesian* school, *Eunapius*,⁴⁴ a native of Sardis, and a pupil of Chrysanthius. He followed the profession of a Sophist, and at the same time practised medicine. He appears to have been initiated in all the mysteries of theurgy. His "Lives," a mass of extravagant tales, discover a feeble

* Ep. ad. Jamblich. 24. 40. 60.

⁴⁰ The reader will find many proofs of Julian's aversion to Christianity, and his injurious treatment of Christians, adduced in Priestley's History of the Chr. Church. Per. ix. § 2, 3, 4. ⁴¹ Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. vii. p. 78.

⁴² Lib. § 83. p. 309.

⁴³ Amm. Marc. l. xxv. c. 3, 4.

⁴⁴ Eunap. p. 77. 99. 162. 198. Phot. Cod. 77.

understanding, and an imagination prone to superstition. Eunapius wrote in the reign of the emperor Theodosius.

Towards the close of the fifth century flourished *Hierocles*, who was born and taught in Alexandria. He suffered severely for his adherence to the Pagan superstitions.⁴⁵ At Constantinople he was cruelly scourged; and in the midst of his torture, receiving some of the blood into his own hand, he threw it upon the face of his judge, repeating the following verse from Homer:⁴⁶

Κύκλωψ, τῇ περ οἶνον, ἐπει φάγες ἀνδρόμεα κρεα.⁴⁷

Hierocles wrote a treatise "On Providence," in which he appears as an advocate for the Eclectic philosophy. He strenuously opposes those writers, who had maintained that the opinions of Plato and Aristotle were inconsistent with each other; and attempts to reconcile their doctrines concerning Providence, the origin of the world, the immortality of the soul, and other subjects. The same method of philosophising is pursued in his book "On Fate," and in his "Commentary on the Golden Verses of Pythagoras." Little confidence is, therefore, to be placed in his representation of the opinions of ancient philosophers. This *Hierocles* is not to be confounded with *Hierocles* of Bythina, who wrote a book against Christianity, which was answered by Eusebius.⁴⁸

Hitherto we have traced the rise and growth of the Eclectic philosophy in Alexandria, and in various parts of Asia. It remains, that we follow its progress in Europe, and particularly at Athens.

Although, after Greece became subject to Rome, its philosophers were dispersed, and its ancient seat of wisdom was for a time neglected, Athens, through the favour of several of the Roman emperors, especially Adrian, and Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, recovered in some measure its former honours.⁴⁹ Adrian founded a library, and Aurelius erected magnificent schools, and established professors in

⁴⁵ *Suidas Phot. Cod.* 214. 251. p. 283. 749.

⁴⁶ *Odys.* l. ix. v. 347.

⁴⁷ *Cyclops*! since human flesh has been thy feast,

Now drain this goblet potent to digest.

Pope.

⁴⁸ *Euseb. Bib. Gr.* v. iii. p. 413. Needham, ed.

⁴⁹ *Pausan. in Attic.* Xiphilin. in. *M. Ant.*

rhetoric, and in the principal seats of philosophy. These schools were liberally endowed, and, according to Lucian,⁴⁰ a large sum was annually paid by the public to the Athenian preceptors. Through this imperial munificence, Athens was again distinguished by a numerous train of philosophers and scholars.⁴¹ The salaries which had been probably discontinued under the Christian emperors, were renewed by Julian, who appointed Chrysanthius preceptor in Athens. The Athenian schools, during the incursions of the Goths, at the close of the fourth century, suffered great injury. They, however, survived that hazardous period, and continued to flourish till after the time of Justinian.⁴²

It was not till the reign of Julian, that the Alexandrian philosophy was publicly professed at Athens.⁴³ After Chrysanthius, the next professor of this system was Plutarch, the son of Nestorius.⁴⁴ He was an eminent teacher of philosophy, and a famous master of the theurgic arts: he had a large body of disciples, who bore his name, and continued in his public capacity to an advanced age. He left the charge of his school to Syrian, an Alexandrian. This Plutarch died about the year 434.

Syrian prosecuted the Eclectic mode of philosophising with great ingenuity and industry; not only combining the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle, but embellishing his complex system with the allegories of Orpheus, Homer, and other ancient poets. "In less than two years," says Marinus,⁴⁵ "Syrian read, with his pupil Proclus, all the works of Aristotle; after which he conducted him to the sacred school of Plato, that he might in his writings contemplate the true mysteries with a pure mind." He wrote "A Commentary on the Theology of Orpheus," and "A Treatise on the Agreement of Orpheus, Pythagoras, and Plato;" but nothing remains of this philosopher, except his "Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics."⁴⁶ Among his pupils, his chief fa-

⁴⁰ Eunuch. t. iv. p. 160.

⁴¹ Eunap. Proceres. p. 138. Chrysanth. p. 198. Philostrat. Vit. Soph. l. ii. c. 2, 3.

⁴² Meurs. de Fort. Attic. c. 8. Synes. Ep. vii. Marin. Vit. Procli. c. xvi. p. 37.

⁴³ Eunap. in Maxim. ⁴⁴ Suidas. Marin. Vit. Proc. c. 12. Phot. Cod. 242.

⁴⁵ Vit. Proc. c. 12. Suidas. Phot. Cod. 241.

⁴⁶ Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. viii. p. 460.

vorite was Proclus, who always retained a warm affection for the memory of his master, and at his death gave orders, that he should be buried in the same grave with Syrian, and that the following epitaph should be inscribed upon their tomb:⁵⁷

Proclus ego heic Lycius jaceo, tuus, optime, alumnus,
 Successorque tuus qui, Syriane, fui:
 Condita communi tumulo hoc sunt corpora nostra,
 Sic et utramque animam coelica templa tenent.⁵⁸

Proclus, according to his biographer *Marinus*,⁵⁹ was a native of Constantinople, and was born in the year 412. His parents having been inhabitants of Xanthus in Lycia, he is commonly spoken of as a Lycian. He received the first rudiments of learning at Xanthus; and afterwards studied eloquence and polite literature under Isaurus at Alexandria, with a view to qualify himself for the profession of the law. This design, however, he soon relinquished, and wholly devoted himself to philosophy. From *Olympiodorus* he learned the Aristotelian system combined with the Platonic; and he was instructed in mathematics by *Hero*. His facility of conception and strength of memory were such, that when his master's lectures, through the rapidity of his utterance, or the abstruse nature of his subject, were not clearly understood by the rest of the pupils, he was able to give an accurate summary of the arguments, in the order in which they had been delivered: a circumstance which gained him great credit and esteem among his fellow-students.

Having spent several years in the Alexandrian schools, *Proclus* determined to visit Athens. Here he first became acquainted with *Syrian*, who introduced him to *Plutarch*, the son of *Nestorius*. The old man was delighted with the

⁵⁷ *Marin. c. 36.*

⁵⁸ Here, much lov'd Syrian, in thy sacred tomb,
 Thy pupil Proclus seeks a peaceful home:
 As in one bed now sleeps our mingled clay,
 So may our souls together win their way
 To the blest mansions of celestial day!

⁵⁹ *Vit. Procli, passim. Suidas,*

attainments of this young stranger, and undertook to conduct him to the more recondite mysteries of philosophy. Plutarch, dying two years afterwards, left Proclus to the care of his successor, Syrian, under whose direction the young man prosecuted his studies with indefatigable industry. He reaped great benefit from the practice, recommended to him by Plutarch, of writing from his own recollection compendious abridgments of the lectures which he had heard from his preceptor. At the age of twenty-eight, he had written, besides many other pieces, his "Commentary on the *Timæus* of Plato," full of that kind of learning which at this time prevailed in the Platonic schools.

In order to reach the point, which was in these schools esteemed the summit of wisdom, Proclus diligently studied the theology of the sect; both that which respects the contemplation of the Supreme Deity, and that which was supposed to lead to an intercourse with inferior divinities. He was instructed in the Chaldean arts of divination, and in the use of mystical words, and other charms, by Plutarch's daughter Asclepigenia, who inherited from her father many secrets of this kind. He was also initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries. By these helps, and by a diligent study of the writings of Plotinus, Porphyry, and Jamblichus, he became, if Marinus be to be credited, a complete master, not only of Divine science, but of theurgic powers.

Thus accomplished, Proclus was judged by Syrian worthy to share with him the honours and profits of the Platonic chair. And there can be no doubt, after what has been related, that he was eminently qualified for the office of preceptor in the Alexandrian philosophy. His biographer may be easily credited when he asserts, that Proclus excelled all his predecessors in the knowledge of this system, and that he improved it by many new discoveries, and was the author of many opinions, which had never before entered into the mind of man, both on the subject of physics, and in the sublime science of Ideas. The lectures which Proclus delivered in his school were obscure and enthusiastic; but they suited the genius and taste of the age, and he had many followers.

The piety of Proclus is highly extolled by his biographer. Of what sort it was, may be learned from the superstitious

manner in which he conducted his devotions. Besides his general abstinence from animal food, in which he followed the Pythagorean discipline, he often practised rigorous fastings; and he spent whole days and nights in repeating prayers and hymns, that he might prepare himself for immediate intercourse with the gods. He observed with great solemnity the new moons, and all public festivals, and, on these occasions, pretended, or fancied, that he conversed with superior beings, and was able, by his sacrifices, prayers and hymns, to expel diseases, to command rain, to stop an earthquake, and to perform other similar wonders. Marinus does not scruple to assert, that, on these occasions, Proclus partook of Divine inspiration, and that a celestial glory irradiated his countenance. He even relates, that God himself appeared to him in a human form, and with an audible voice hailed him as the glory of the city. In his old age his mental infirmities, as might naturally be expected, increased with those of his body; and he fancied, between sleeping and waking (the season in which these visions commonly happen) that Esculapius approached him in the form of a dragon, and relieved his pain. Without attempting accurately to determine how much of these tales is to be ascribed to the invention of Marinus, and how much to the fanaticism of his master, we may perceive in them proofs of superstitious weakness, of artful hypocrisy, or of a strange union of both, abundantly sufficient to justify us in ranking Proclus among enthusiasts or impostors, rather than among philosophers.

If the reader require any further evidence on this head, we must refer him to the writings of Proclus, in which he appears at once a man of erudition and a fanatic. They contain a rude and indigested mass of materials, collected with bold variations from the Chaldaic, Orphic, Hermetic, Pythagoric, Platonic, and Aristotelian doctrines, and adorned with fictions and allegories, which, while they involve the subjects, upon which the writer treats, in thick darkness, discover great luxuriance of imagination. The confusion and obscurity of his works may be in part owing to the hasty manner in which they were written, but are chiefly to be ascribed to the enthusiastic cast of the writer's mind, and to the mystical spirit of the system which he espoused. Of the

works of Proclus which remain, some are philosophical, as his "Commentaries upon the *Timæus*," and several other dialogues of Plato; some theological, as his "Institutes of Theology;" some critical, as his "Chrestomathia," of which Photius has preserved an epitome; and some mathematical, as his "Paraphrase upon Ptolemy, Euclid," &c. and his "Doctrine of the Sphere." This last piece was in part copied, without acknowledgment, from the *Isagoge* of Geminus, an astronomer of some distinction in the time of Cicero.⁶⁰ Proclus died of the gout, in the year 485.

The Eclectic school at Athens was continued by *Marius*,⁶¹ a native of Sichem in Palestine, and a convert from the Samaritan to the Gentile religion. If the mathematical writings which bear his name be really his, which has been doubted, they are a sufficient proof of his proficiency in this kind of learning. His life of Proclus rather delineates a picture of a perfect philosopher, than relates the actions and opinions of his hero. The work abounds with ridiculous tales, and destroys its own credibility by manifest contradictions. Towards the close of his life, *Marius*, perceiving his health decline, was anxious to find a successor, who might continue, with credit, what was called the chain of the Platonic succession, and for that purpose made choice of *Isidorus*, who soon afterwards removed to Alexandria, and left the Athenian school in the hands of *Zenodotus*,⁶² a pupil of Proclus.

Isidorus, as we learn from his biographer *Damascius*,⁶³ was a native of Gaza in Palestine, a city which retained the Gentile superstitions long after Christianity had been commonly embraced in the neighbouring countries. At Alexandria, whither he was sent by his parents for education, he was instructed in rhetoric and polite learning by *Asclepiodotus*, a Platonist; but he neglected these studies, that he might devote himself entirely to sublimer speculations. The fame of Proclus, as a preceptor in theology, soon induced him to repair to his school at Athens. Bring-

⁶⁰ Voss. de Scient. Math. c. 32. § 26. Fabr. de Procli Scriptis. § 11. Bib. Gr. v. viii. p. 518.

⁶¹ *Damascius in Vit. Isidori*, ap. Phot. Cod. 181. *Suidas*. Voss. ib. p. 442. Fabr. viii. 364.

⁶² *Damasc. ib.* p. 563. ⁶³ *ib. Cod.* 181, 242. *Suidas*.

ing with him a mind inured to profound meditation, and an imagination inflamed with enthusiasm, he found it no difficult labour, under the direction of Proclus, to soar into the regions of mysticism. After the death of his master, he entertained a superstitious reverence for his memory, and offered sacrifices to him as to a divinity.⁶⁴ Relinquishing, however, for reasons which do not appear, the chair to which he had been appointed by Marinus, he returned to Alexandria. After a short residence in that city, he fled, with several other philosophers, into Persia, to escape the persecution of Justinian. About the year 528 he returned from his voluntary exile.⁶⁵ As Isidorus had been a pupil of Proclus, he must have been far advanced in life when he left Persia. The exact dates of his birth and death cannot be ascertained; but it is probable that he was not born later than the year 465, and that he did not die before the year 540.

The succession of the Platonic or Eclectic school in Alexandria terminated in *Damascius*,⁶⁶ a native of Syria. He studied both at Athens and Alexandria, and in the latter school was a professor of philosophy, till he was driven into Persia by the severities which, as we have said, were exercised by the emperor Justinian against the Gentile philosophers. His "Lives of Isidorus and Others," and the few fragments of his philosophy which remain, are strongly marked with the characters of the Eclectic school, obscurity, fanaticism, and imposture.

To this list of Alexandrian philosophers must be added the celebrated female *Hypatia*,⁶⁷ whose extensive learning, elegant manners, and tragical end, have rendered her name immortal. Hypatia was the daughter of Theon, a celebrated mathematician of Alexandria. She possessed an acute and penetrating judgment, and great sublimity and fertility of genius, and her talents were cultivated with assiduity by her father, and other preceptors. After she had made herself mistress of polite learning, and of the sciences of geometry and astronomy, as far as they were then un-

⁶⁴ Damascius, p. 566, 569, 570.

⁶⁵ Agathias de reb. Justin. l. ii.

⁶⁶ Suidas in *ωπερ*, t. iii. p. 171. Petav. Rat. Temp. l. vii. c. 8.

⁶⁷ Phot. Cod. 181. p. 212. Cod. 242. p. 566. Suidas.

⁶⁸ Suidas. Socrat. Hist. Eccl. l. vii. c. 15.

derstood, she entered upon the study of philosophy. She prosecuted this study with such uncommon success, that she was importuned to become a public preceptress in the school where Plotinus and his successors had taught: and her love of science enabled her so far to subdue the natural diffidence of the sex, that she yielded to the public voice, and exchanged her female decorations for the philosopher's cloak.⁶⁸ In the schools, and in other places of public resort, she discoursed upon philosophical topics, explaining, and endeavouring to reconcile, the systems of Plato, Aristotle, and other masters. A ready elocution, and graceful address, united with rich erudition and sound judgment, procured her numerous followers and admirers; among whom was Synesius, afterwards to be mentioned. But that which reflects the highest honour upon her memory is, that, though she excelled most of the philosophers of her age in mathematical and philosophical science, she discovered no pride of learning; and, though she was in person exceedingly beautiful, she never yielded to the impulse of female vanity, or gave occasion to the slightest suspicion against her chastity.

The extraordinary combination of accomplishments and virtues, which adorned the character of Hypatia, rendered her house the general resort of persons of learning and distinction. But it was impossible that so much merit should not excite envy. The qualifications and attainments, to which she was indebted for her celebrity, proved in the issue the occasion of her destruction. It happened that, at this time, the patriarchal chair of Alexandria was occupied by Cyril, a bishop of great authority, but of great haughtiness and violence of temper. In the vehemence of his bigoted zeal, he had treated the Jews with severity, and at last banished them out of Alexandria. Orestes, the prefect of the city, a man of liberal spirit, highly resented this expulsion, as an unpardonable stretch of ecclesiastical power, and a cruel act of oppression and injustice against a people who had inhabited Alexandria from the time of its founder. He reported the affair to the emperor. The bishop, on his part, complained to the prince of the seditious temper of the Jews, and attempted to justify his

⁶⁸ Nicephor. l. xiv. c. 16. Synesii Epist. ad Hypat.

proceedings. The emperor declined to interpose his authority ; and the affair rapidly advanced to the utmost extremity. A body of about five hundred monks, who espoused the cause of Cyril, came into the city with a determination to support him by force. Meeting the prefect, as he was passing through the street in his carriage, they stopped him, and loaded him with reproaches ; and one of them threw a stone at his head and wounded him. The populace, who were by this time assembled on the part of the prefect, routed the monks, and seized one of their leaders. Orestes ordered him to be put to death. Cyril buried his body in the church, and gave instructions, that his name should be registered among the sacred martyrs. Hypatia, who had always been highly respected by the prefect, and who had at this time frequent conferences with him, was supposed by the partizans of the bishop to have been deeply engaged in the interest of Orestes. Their resentment, at length, rose to such a height, that they formed a design against her life. As she was one day returning home from the schools, the mob seized her, forced her from her chair, and carried her to the Cæsarean church ; where, stripping off her garments, they put her to death with extreme barbarity ; and having torn her body limb from limb, committed it to the flames. Cyril himself has, by some writers, been suspected of secretly prompting this horrid act of violence. And if the haughtiness and severity of his temper, his persecution of the Jews, his oppressive and iniquitous treatment of the Novatian sect of Christians and their bishop, the vehemence of his present indignation against Orestes and his party, and, above all, the protection which he is said to have afforded to the immediate perpetrator of the murder of Hypatia, be duly considered, it will perhaps appear, that this suspicion is not wholly without foundation. Hypatia was murdered under the reign of the emperor Theodosius II. in the year 415.⁶⁹ Hence it is certain, that she could not have been, as Suidas,⁷⁰ with his usual precipitation, relates, the wife of Isidorus : it is probable, that through her whole life she remained in a state of celibacy.

Besides the philosophers of the Alexandrian or Eclectic

⁶⁹ Socrat. Hist. Eccl. l. vii. c. 15.

⁷⁰ Hypat. t. iii. p. 533.

sect who have been enumerated, and others of inferior note, there were many persons, who, though not philosophers by profession, espoused the doctrines of Platonism, as they were new modelled in this school. Among these were several celebrated writers; particularly, *Macrobius*,⁷¹ who flourished in the reigns of Honorius and Theodosius II. and wrote, besides other pieces, "A Commentary on Scipio's Dream," as described by Cicero, a work full of Platonic notions; and also *Saturnalia*, or "Learned Conversations;" and *Ammianus Marcellinus*, an historian of credit, who mentions, with high respect, several philosophers of the Platonic school.⁷²

Having thus far taken an historical survey of the rise and progress of the Eclectic sect, it remains that we endeavour, somewhat more distinctly, to mark the circumstances which contributed towards its establishment, and to enumerate its peculiar tenets. This is the more necessary, as the doctrines of this school were widely disseminated, and obtained a powerful influence, not only in other philosophical sects, but even in the Christian church.

The Eclectic sect took its rise, as we have seen, among the Egyptians, a people peculiarly addicted to superstition, among whom the art of divination is said to have originated.⁷³ It was formed in Alexandria, a city colonized from many different nations, whose inhabitants brought with them their respective religious and philosophical tenets. The Pythagoric and Platonic doctrine had been in many respects similar to that of the Egyptians, and therefore obtained an easy admission into their schools, at a time when the philosophy of Greece, already universally celebrated, was introduced under the sanction of conquest. Before the commencement of the Christian era, the return of those philosophers who had, during the reign of Ptolemy Physcon, been dispersed in Asia, and had there learned the Oriental philosophy, increased the chaotic mass of opinions in theology and philosophy, which had been forming in the Alexandrian schools from their first establishment; the confusion and inconsistency of which were now, with much industry, concealed under the veil of alle-

⁷¹ Cod. Theodos. l. vi. t. 8.

⁷² L. xxii. 16. xxiii. 6. xxx. 4.

⁷³ Ammian. Marcell. l. xxii. c. 16.

gory. It will clearly appear from an attentive comparison of these circumstances, that the Eclectic method of philosophising began at a period prior to the time of Christ.

The violent dissensions, which diversity of opinions produced in the Alexandrian schools, inclined many to wish for a general coalition of sects. This project appears to have been first formed by Potamo, and to have been carried into execution by Ammonius, and his followers. The philosophy of Plato, already united with that of Pythagoras, was made the basis of this new system; whence the sect was considered as a Platonic school, and its followers have been commonly distinguished by the appellation of the later Platonists. With the doctrines of Plato they attempted to blend those of Aristotle, who from the time of Demetrius Phaleretus had been in high estimation in Alexandria. In dialectics, this union was not difficult; but in physics and metaphysics, the leading dogmas of these philosophers were so widely different, and in many respects even contradictory, that it was impossible to bring them together, without distorting and misrepresenting both, and contriving strange and fanciful hypotheses to reconcile them. One memorable example of these, among many which might be adduced, is the dogma of the Eclectic school concerning the eternal generation of the world in the Divine mind, which neither agrees with Plato's doctrine of Ideas, nor with Aristotle's notion concerning the eternity of the world. The Stoic system was also in the Eclectic school accommodated to the Platonic; and the moral writings of the followers of Zeno were explained upon the principles of Plato. The Enchiridion of Epictetus, for instance, is platonised in the Commentary of Simplicius. The only sect, with which the Alexandrian school could come to no terms of agreement, was that of Epicurus, whose mechanical principles of nature were contrary to the fundamental doctrines of Platonism. It must be evident, on the most cursory view, that a method of philosophising, which thus undertook to combine the tenets of different sects, could answer no other purpose than to confound all former distinctions, and to give birth to new absurdities.

Plato having proposed the intuitive contemplation of Intelligibles, and especially of the First Intelligence, the Su-

pietate Deity, as the summit of human felicity, the philosophers of the Eclectic sect were peculiarly ambitious of this sublime attainment, and even carried their notions and pretensions on this subject further than their master. Not satisfied with arriving at a formal and essential intuition of Divine natures, they aspired after a sort of deification of the human mind. That they might the more easily reach, in imagination, this point of perfection, they forsook the *Dualistic system* which Plato had assumed, and adopted from the Oriental philosophy the *system of Emanation*, which supposed an indefinite series of spiritual natures, derived from the Supreme Source; whence, considering the human mind as a link in this chain of intelligence, they conceived that, by passing through various stages of purification, it might at length ascend to the first Fountain of Intelligence, and enjoy a mysterious union with the Divine nature. They even imagined that the soul of man, properly prepared by previous discipline, might rise to a capacity of holding immediate intercourse with good demons, and even to enjoy, in extacy, an intuitive vision of God: a point of perfection and felicity which many of their great men, such as Plotinus, Porphyry, Jamblichus, and Proclus, were supposed actually to have attained.

Several circumstances concurred to give this enthusiastic cast to the Alexandrian school. The Platonic sect had, from its first institution, leaned towards enthusiasm. That part of their system, which these later Platonists had borrowed from the Oriental school, was wonderfully calculated to cherish the flights of a luxuriant fancy. And the union of the two characters of philosopher and priest, which, as appears in the lives of Apollonius, Apuleius, and others, was at this period not unusual, whilst it would in some cases be favourable to imposture, would, in others, serve to minister fuel to the fire of enthusiasm.

In order to account still farther for some of the more striking features of the Eclectic sect, it is necessary particularly to remark the arts, which the leaders of this sect employed to obstruct the progress of the Christian religion. By combining into one system all the important tenets, both theological and philosophical, which were at that time received, either in the Pagan or the Christian

schools, they hoped to confirm the heathens in their attachment to their old superstitions, and to reconcile the Christians to Paganism. They endeavoured to conceal the absurdities of the ancient religion, by casting over its fables the veil of allegory, and thus representing them as founded upon important truths. The numerous train of heathen divinities they represented as emanations from the Supreme Deity, through whom he himself was worshipped. That their system might, if possible, rival that which was taught in the Christian schools, they speculated, after the manner of Plato, upon Divine and intelligent natures: they even attempted to incorporate with their own dogmas several of the peculiar doctrines received among the Christians, and made no scruple to deck themselves with borrowed ornaments, by imitating, on many occasions, the language of the Christian fathers. In hopes of counteracting the credit which Christianity derived from the exalted merit of its Founder, and from the purity of manners which prevailed among his followers, these philosophers practised rigorous abstinence, by which they professed to purify themselves from every tincture of moral defilement, and passed whole days and nights in contemplation and devotion. With a view to destroy the authority which the Christian religion derived from miracles, or at least to reduce it to a level with their own, they pretended to a power of performing supernatural operations by the aid of invisible beings; and maintained, that the miracles of Christ were wrought by the same magical, or theurgic, powers which they themselves possessed. Lastly, for the purpose of supporting the credit of Paganism against that of Christianity, they obtruded upon the world many spurious books, under the name of Hermes, Orpheus, and other illustrious ancients.

The Eclectic sect, thus raised upon the foundations of superstition, enthusiasm, and imposture, proved the occasion of much confusion and mischief both to the Christian religion and to philosophy.

In the infancy of the Alexandrian school, not a few among the professors of Christianity suffered themselves to be so far deluded by the pretensions of this sect, as to imagine that a coalition might with great advantage be

formed between its system and that of Christianity; and this union seemed the more desirable, as several philosophers of this sect became converts to the Christian faith. But the consequence was, that Pagan ideas and opinions were by degrees mixed with the pure and simple doctrine of the gospel; the fanatical philosophy of Ammonius corrupted the pure religion of Christ; and his church became a field of contention, and a nursery of error.

This project for a coalition of systems was not less injurious to philosophy. Before this period, although the philosophical world had been divided into many sects, and disturbed by endless controversies, still each sect had its peculiar character and tenets; so that any one, who was desirous of knowing the truth, might form a judgment for himself of their respective merits, and might adopt that system which he judged to be most consonant to reason. But, in attempting to combine the leading tenets of each sect into one common system, these philosophers were obliged, in many cases, to understand them in a sense different from that of their original authors; whence it becomes impossible, from their writings, to form an accurate notion either of the Platonic, the Peripatetic, the Stoic, the Egyptian, or the Oriental philosophy. Finding it impracticable to produce an appearance of harmony among systems essentially different from each other, without casting a veil of obscurity over the whole, they exerted their utmost ingenuity, in devising fanciful conceptions, subtle distinctions, airy suppositions, and vague terms; combinations of which, infinitely diversified, they attempted, too successfully, to impose upon the world as a system of real and sublime truths. It is not easy to conceive, how many thorns and briars, from this time, obstructed the path of science. Lost in subtleties, these pretenders to superior wisdom were perpetually endeavouring to explain, by imaginary resemblances, and arbitrary distinctions, what they themselves probably never understood. Disdaining to submit to the guidance of reason and good sense, they gave up the reins to imagination, and suffered themselves to be borne away through the boundless regions of metaphysics, where the eye labours in vain to follow them. If any one be desirous of proofs or illustrations of these re-

marks, we refer them to the writings of Plotinus and Proclus, on the subjects of the Deity and inferior Divine natures, where he will meet with innumerable examples of egregious trifling, under the appearance of profound philosophy.

It would be an undertaking wholly impracticable, to frame an accurate delineation of the Eclectic doctrine; both because its authors were not agreed among themselves in any one system, and because they do not appear to have themselves clearly conceived the meaning of many of their own dogmas. We shall, however, lay before the reader a brief specimen of this philosophy, in metaphysics, from Plotinus; in theology, from Jamblichus; and in morals, from Porphyry.

In metaphysics Plotinus taught thus :—

The First Principle of the universe is not the universe, but above all, and the power of all; without which nothing could be; which, though the fountain of being, is itself incapable of division or increase. This First Principle, the cause of intellectual life, the source of essence and being, is simple, and having no place, has neither motion nor rest. It is infinite, not as being immense, but as it is one, and has nothing by which it can be limited: because that from which all things proceed can permit nothing to exist better than itself, it is the best of all beings. It is essential good, most fair and beautiful; and because it is in itself lovely, and the author of all that is lovely, it is the beginning and end of beauty. No attribute is to be ascribed to this First Principle in the same sense in which it is ascribed to other beings, but in a manner wholly inexplicable. Its nature is to be comprehended rather by profound contemplation, than by any act of the understanding.⁷⁴

From this First Principle proceeds mind, or intellect; and soul, or the active principle. The primary essential good is the centre; mind, the light emerging from it, and remaining fixed; soul, the motion of the emanating light; body, the opaque substance which is illuminated by the soul. In the production of the Second Principle, mind, no kind of action, or will, is to be supposed; for then that

⁷⁴ Plotin. *Enn.* iii. l. viii. c. 9. *En.* v. l. ii. c. 1. l. v. c. 10, 11. *En.* vi. l. ii. c. 9. l. vii. c. 23. 33. l. viii. c. 7. *Jambl. de Myst.* S. viii. c. 2.

action, or will, would be the second, and mind the third emanation. The First Principle, having been always perfect, has always produced the second; which is inferior to the producing cause, but superior to all other natures. This Second Principle, mind, is necessarily united to its source, and is the image of God, bearing such resemblance to him as light bears to the sun: it is produced by the energy of the First Principle, and is the exerted power of vision, reflection, or intelligence. This Second Principle being produced, its energy produces within itself the fair universe of ideas, or intelligible natures; whence it comprehends a plenitude of all things as essential principles, before they exist as material substances. Intelligence is the act of intellect, or mind, contemplating intelligible natures. These natures may be considered as numbers proceeding from the Monad, or First Principle, and duad, or first emanation: but the First Principle, considered in itself must be distinguished from these; for intellect, being exercised in contemplating intelligible natures within, but distinct from, itself, wants that simplicity which is essential to the First Principle.⁷⁵

From the emanative energy of mind is produced soul, or the active principle of life. This Divine principle is the fountain, whence all life is derived. It subsists, as well as intellect, within the Divine essence, and is, therefore, *ἐνερgeticόν*, supramundane.⁷⁶ This is the immediate source of the principle which animates the world, *ἐγκόσμιον*, and which is diffused, in various portions, through animated nature.⁷⁷

Matter is the receptacle and subject of forms, but has in itself neither figure, quality, magnitude, nor place, and can, therefore, only be defined negatively: nevertheless, it is not a mere name, but truly exists as the basis of qualities. Matter exists potentially; bodies actually, with their peculiar characters.⁷⁸

There never was a time when matter and form existed

⁷⁵ En. ii. l. ix. c. 1. En. iv. l. iii. c. 14. 17. En. v. l. i. c. 4. 6, 7. l. iv. c. ult. l. v. c. 1. 12. l. vi. c. 1, 2. l. vii. c. 1. l. ix. c. 6 & 8.

⁷⁶ En. iii. l. v. c. 2. En. v. l. i. c. 7. l. viii. c. 4.

⁷⁷ Proclus in Tim. l. ii. p. 92.

⁷⁸ Plot. En. ii. l. iv. c. 1—6. 11, 12. l. v. c. 2.

separately, or when the universe was not animated.⁸⁰ To suppose the formation of the universe the effect of chance is absurd. The world is to be conceived as having always existed, and mind as prior to it, not in the order of time, but of nature, and therefore as the eternal and necessary cause, both formal and efficient, of its existence.⁸¹ The sensible world is produced after the pattern of the intelligible world, by the energy of mind pouring forth some portion of its own nature upon matter, and hereby giving it the first unconscious principle of motion and form.⁸² The world contains superior and inferior regions, the former of which are inhabited by gods and other celestial beings, the latter by men and inferior animals. Because the world includes every thing within itself, so there is nothing into which it can be changed, nor any external force by which it can be dispersed, it must be perpetual in its duration.⁸³

Among celestial natures, there are various orders, possessing different degrees of perfection, and all entitled to religious worship, gods, demons, genii, heroes. The souls of men and inferior animals form the common limit between the intellectual and sensible world.⁸⁴

The human soul is derived from the supramundane soul, or first principle of life, and is, in this respect, sister to the soul of the world. Souls are not in the body as their place, nor as their receptacle, nor as their subject, nor as a part of a whole, nor as a form united to matter, but simply as the animating principle: for it is in this respect only that we know the soul to be present with the body. The power of the soul is diffused through every part of the body; and though it be said to reside in its chief instrument, the brain, it is incorporeal, and exists entirely every where within the sphere of its energy. Partaking of the nature of real being, it is immutable. It is the principle of motion, moving itself, and communicating motion to bodies. The vices and infelicities of the soul are wholly derived from its union with the body.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ En. iv. l. iii. c. 9.

⁸¹ En. iii. l. i. c. 1. Porphy. Ant. Nymph. p. 131. Jamb. Myst. Egypt. s. viii. c. 3.

⁸² From this doctrine Cudworth, in his *Intellectual System*, derives his Plastic Nature. ⁸³ En. iii. l. i. c. 2, 3, 4. 8—10. ⁸⁴ En. iii. l. v. c. 6.

⁸⁵ En. v. l. i. c. 2. En. iv. l. ii. c. 18. l. iii. c. 20. l. i. p. 360. l. ii. c. 1. En. ii. l. ii. c. 18. l. ix. c. 6. En. iv. l. vii. c. 1, 2. 9. 11.

Souls, in the periodical revolutions of nature, separate themselves from their fountain, and descend into the lower regions of the world. In their passage they attract to themselves an ethereal vehicle, and at last sink into animal bodies, as into a cavern, or sepulchre. But when, by the power of reminiscence, they again turn themselves to the contemplation of intelligible and Divine natures, they regain their freedom.⁸⁶ God, on account of his greatness, is not known by intelligence, or sense, but by a kind of intuition superior to science, by means of which the soul can see him in his real nature, as the fountain of life, mind, and being, and the cause of good.⁸⁷ A soul which has attained to this vision of God will lament its union with the body, and will rejoice to leave its prison, and return to the Divine nature from which it proceeded.⁸⁸ After death, the souls of men pass into other animals, or ascend into superior regions, and are converted into beings of an higher order, according to their present degree of defilement or purification.⁸⁹

The theological doctrine of Jamblichus is briefly this :

The human soul has an innate knowledge of God prior to all reasoning, having originally derived its essence from, and subsisted in, the Divine nature : by the intervention of demons it enjoys communication with the superior divinities, and with God himself. Prayers, hymns, lustrations, sacrifices, are the means by which this intercourse is maintained. Gods, demons, and heroes, appear to men under various forms, in dreams or waking visions, to render them bodily or spiritual services, and to enable them to predict future events. These communications with Divine natures are not to be obtained, but by the observance of certain sacred rites, whose symbolical meaning is only known to the gods, and to those who are conversant with these mysteries. The signs of Divine communication, *ἐκθυσιασμός*, are a temporary suspension of the senses and faculties, the interruption of the ordinary functions of life, and a capacity of speaking and doing wonders, so that the person doth not live an animal, or human, but a Divine life.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ En. iv. l. iii. c. 12. l. iv. c. 16. l. ix. c. 4. En. vi. l. viii. c. 1.

⁸⁷ En. vi. l. ix. c. 4. 7. ⁸⁸ C. 8, 9.

⁸⁹ En. i. l. ix. c. 1. En. iii. l. iv. c. 2.

Jamblich. de Mysteriis Ægyptiorum. Ed. Gal. Oxon. 1707. fol.

Upon the foundation of these enthusiastic notions was raised the Ethical system of the Alexandrian school. Their moral doctrine, as it appears in the writings of Porphyry and others, was, briefly, as follows:

The mind of man, originally a portion of the Divine nature, having fallen into a state of darkness and defilement by its union with the body, is to be gradually emancipated from the chain of matter, and by contemplating real entities, to rise to the knowledge and vision of God. The end of philosophy is, therefore, the liberation of the soul from its corporeal imprisonment. For this purpose, it must pass through the several stages of the human and Divine virtues. The human virtues are physical, economical, and political; or, those which respect the care of the body, and the offices of domestic and civil life. The Divine virtues are purgative, theoretic, and theurgic: the first class consists in bodily abstinence, and other voluntary mortifications; the second comprehends all those exercises of the intellect and imagination, by which the mind contemplates abstract truth, and intelligible natures; the third includes those religious exercises, by which the philosopher is qualified for, and admitted to, an immediate intercourse with superior beings, attains a power over demons, and ascends so far above the ordinary condition of humanity, as to enjoy the vision of God in this life, and to return, at death, to the Divine Mind, whence it first proceeded.⁹¹

On reviewing the speculative part of the Eclectic system, as it appears in the preceding summary, the reader will easily perceive that the Alexandrian philosophers, though they founded their system chiefly upon the doctrine of Plato, departed from him in many particulars. Their notions of the Divine nature are not strictly Platonic; but the fanciful conceptions of Plato pursued to a higher degree of extravagance, and blended with the Egyptian and Oriental doctrine of emanation. Those of the Oriental philosophers, who were called Gnostics, carried this doctrine to

⁹¹ Porphyr. de Abstinentiæ, et Sententiæ, &c. Jambl. Serm. Protrept. pass. Conf. Plot. En. iii. l. ix. c. 9, 10. En. iv. l. iii. c. 7. En. vi. l. ult. Amm. Marcell. l. xxv. c. 4. Macrobian. Som. Sc. l. i. c. 7. 13. Simplic. in Epict. p. 5.

so absurd an extreme, as to imagine a long genealogy of Divine essences, flowing from the first fountain of existence, and dwelling within the infinite plenitude of the Divine nature: to these they gave the name of *Eons*. Plotinus maintained, against the Gnostics, that there are only three distinct *hypostases*, subsistences, in the Divine nature.⁹² He receded from Plato, in supposing one of these, the soul, or animating principle, to be a part of the Divine nature, and not a separate and subordinate principle, the soul of the world. Others⁹³ converted this trinity into a quaternity, by conceiving three principles, intellect, ideas, and soul, to be derived from one common source, the First Principle of all existence. In what manner they supposed the intelligible world to subsist in the Divine nature, whilst, nevertheless, it retained its simplicity, it may be difficult to explain. But it appears evident, that, with Plato, they understood these ideas to be something more than mere conceptions, and imagined them to have a real existence, comprehended within the Divine essence.⁹⁴ Plotinus expresses his notion of these intelligible natures, under the image of waters existing in their fountain before they flow forth in streams.⁹⁵ Another essential difference between the doctrine of Plato himself, and that of the latter Platonists, is, that whilst Plato held the *Dualistic system*, which supposed matter to have existed eternally as a substance distinct from mind, the Alexandrian philosopher conceived matter itself to have proceeded by eternal emanation from the Divine nature. To this we may add, that Plato taught, that the universe was formed, at a certain finite time, by the voluntary energy of Divine power upon the eternal mass of matter; but the Alexandrian Platonists, that intelligible forms have been eternally impressed upon matter; that is, that the universe has existed from eternity.

It is wonderful to observe how laboriously these philosophers tortured their imaginations in attempting to solve difficulties, which existed only in their own fanciful system, or which lie beyond the reach of the human understanding.

⁹² En. ii. l. ix. c. 1.

⁹³ Cyril. Alex. adv. Julian. l. i. p. 35. l. viii. p. 371. Proclus. in Tim. Plat. l. ii. p. 93.

⁹⁴ Plot. En. v. l. i. c. 7.

⁹⁵ En. iii. l. viii. c. 9.

They took infinite pains to distinguish between intelligible and intelligent natures ;⁹⁶ to shew, how ideas, not in themselves intelligent, but the objects of intelligence, could exist in the Divine intellect ; to explain the manner in which the Divine mind acts upon matter ; to make it evident, that matter is sent forth by emanation from an immaterial source ; and to clear up other imaginary or inexplicable mysteries. " The Divine Mind," says Plotinus,⁹⁷ " acts upon matter by means of ideas, not externally, after the manner of human art, but internally, as a forming nature ; neither separate from matter, nor mixed with it, he sends forth himself ideas, or forms, and impresses them upon matter." " God," says Jamblichus, " produced matter, by separating materiality from essentiality."

But it is wholly unnecessary to dwell longer upon the visionary subtleties of the Alexandrian philosophy. The facts and opinions which we have laid before the reader respecting the Eclectic sect will, we doubt not, be thought abundantly sufficient to justify this general conclusion ; that the Plotinian school, by combining systems which were originally distinct from each other ; by personifying abstract conceptions, and speaking of them as real beings ; by inventing strange fictions concerning the Supreme Being, and concerning subordinate divinities ; and by raising upon these fictions the baseless fabric of enthusiasm and fanaticism, introduced infinite confusion into philosophy, and fatally obstructed, instead of promoting, the progress of useful knowledge. The pernicious influence of the Eclectic system, both upon opinions and manners, through many succeeding ages, will be seen in the sequel.*

* Plot. Enn. I. viii. c. 4. 97 Enn. vi. I. v. c. 8. En. iii. I. i. c. 2.

* Vidend. Voss. de Sect. c. 21. § 23. Heuman. Act. Phil. v. i. p. 327. Gesner. Act. Phil. v. i. p. 851. Mosheim, de Turb. per recent. Plat. Eccl. § 8. Selden in Orig. Alexand. p. 147. Oudin. de Scr. Eccl. t. I. p. 230, 238. Rhodogin. Ant. Lect. I. xxi. c. 10. Blount. Cens. p. 203. Jons. I. ii. c. 9. 18. I. iii. c. 11. 15, 16, 17. Holsten. Vit. Porph. ed. Rom. Basnage Annal. t. ii. An. 278. Vincent. Lirinensio. Commonit. c. 23. ed Bal. Pearson. Vind. Ignat. p. ii. c. 1. Huet. Origen. An. I. i. c. 1. Thomas Obs. de Porph. ap Heuman. t. iii. p. 53. Misc. Lips. t. i. p. 317. Clerici Bibl. Anc. et Mod. t. x. Reland. Palæstin. I. i. c. 48. Voss. de Hist. Gr. I. ii. c. 18. Conring. Ant. Acad. Diss. 1. Schmidii Diss. de Hypatia. Cave Hist. Lit. Sac. p. 251. Voss. de Sc. Math. c. xvi. § 9.

SECT. V.

Of the State of the Peripatetic Philosophy under the Roman Emperors.

WHILST Platonism, and the Eclectic sect, which rose out of Platonism, flourished at Alexandria and Athens, and had many advocates in Rome, the other ancient sects still continued to exist in their respective forms, and to be supported by able patrons.

The Peripatetic philosophy, which had been introduced into Rome, as we have seen, by Tyrannio and Andronicus, by whom the writings of Aristotle and Theophrastus were rescued from oblivion, regained its ancient credit under the Cæsars. From the time of Andronicus to that of Ammonius, the preceptor of Plutarch, that is, till the reign of Nero, the doctrines of this sect were taught with great purity in its schools. But after Ammonius, it began to experience the influence of that spirit of confusion, which prevailed among the Eclectic philosophers; and the plan of Antiochus, who had formerly attempted a coalition between Aristotle, Plato, and Zeno, was revived. The Peripatetic sect was from this time divided into two branches; the one consisting of such as attempted to combine the doctrines of other schools with those of Aristotle; the other, including those who wished to follow more closely the steps of the Stagyrite.⁹⁸

Julius Cæsar, and Augustus, patronized the Peripatetic philosophy; the former in the person of Sosigenes, the latter in that of Nicolaus. Under the tyrannical reigns of Tiberius, Caligula, and Claudius, it experienced worse fortune; many excellent men of this sect, as well as others, being either banished from Rome, or obliged, through fear of persecution, to remain silent. In the reign of Nero, a for-

Bayle. Moshem de Studio Ethnicorum Christianos imitandi. Diss. H. E. p. 330. Idem de Causis suppos. lib. ibid. p. 217. Cudworth. c. iv. § 23. 30, &c. cum Notis Moshem. Fabr. Proleg. in Vit. Procli. De Bletterie Vie de Julien. Amst. 1735. Rechenberg. de Apost. Jul. Toland's Tetradymus. Wernsdorf. Diss. 1734.

⁹⁸ Nunnes. ad Vit. Arist. p. 153. Patricii Disc. Perip. t. i. l. x. p. 127. xl. p. 145. Fabric. Bibl. Gr. v. ii. p. 271.

fortunate circumstance for awhile raised philosophy from the dust. Agrippina, the wife of the emperor Claudius, having formed the design of advancing her son Nero to the imperial power, in order to give the people high expectations concerning him, committed the charge of his education to philosophers of the first eminence, particularly Seneca the Stoic, and Ægeus the Peripatetic. In consequence of this appointment, philosophers continued, for about five years, to enjoy the patronage of the imperial court: but, after that period, they shared the fate of the professors of magical arts, or, as they were then called, mathematicians, and were again banished the city.⁹⁹ During the first century of the Roman empire, we find few celebrated names among the Peripatetic philosophers. The principal are Sosigenes, Boethius, Nicolaus, and Ægeus.

Sosigenes, a native of Egypt, acquired great celebrity by his acquaintance with mathematical science, and was employed by Julius Cæsar in correcting the calendar. He wrote a commentary upon Aristotle's treatise *De Cælo*.¹

Boethius of Sidon was a pupil of Andronicus.² Strabo mentions him as his fellow-pupil in the study of the Aristotelian philosophy, and ranks him among the most famous philosophers of his time.³

Nicolaus,³ a native of Damascus in Syria, flourished in the time of Augustus. He was a man of extensive learning, and an illustrious ornament of the Peripatetic school. Herod the Great made choice of him for his preceptor in philosophy; and, when he sailed to Rome, for the purpose of visiting the emperor, took him as his companion in the voyage. Afterwards, interrupting the study of philosophy, that prince prosecuted historical learning under Nicolaus, who, at his request, undertook to write an Universal History. Introduced by Herod to Augustus, he was admitted to his intimate friendship, and received from him many

⁹⁹ Plin. Hist. N. l. xxx. c. 1.

¹ Plin. l. xviii. c. 25. Conf. Patric. l. x. p. 134. Voss. de Scient. Math. c. 33.

² Ammon. in Categ. p. 8.

³ Menag. ad Laert. l. vi. § 443. Strabo. l. xvi. p. 757. Fab. Bib. Gr. v. ii. p. 299.

⁴ Athenæus l. vi. p. 246. Plut. Symp. l. viii. qu. 4. Phot. Cod. 189. Suidas. Suet. in Aug. c. 78. Simplic. l. ii. de Cælo. Fabr. v. ii. p. 199.

valuable tokens of regard. The integrity and generosity of his spirit, and the urbanity of his manners, obtained him universal respect. Nicolaus wrote several treatises on the philosophy of Aristotle; "A Dissertation on the Manners of various Nations;" "Memoirs of Augustus;" and, "His own Life." Of these some fragments are preserved by Valesius.*

Alexander Ægeus wrote a commentary upon Aristotle's Meteorology, in the manner of the ancient Peripatetici. He was, as we have said, one of Nero's preceptors, but gained little credit in this capacity, for he is suspected of having contributed to the corruption of his royal pupil. This philosopher is sometimes confounded with *Alexander Aphrodisæus*.⁶

About this time *Ammonius*, the preceptor of Plutarch, attempted to extend the authority of Aristotle beyond the limits of his own sect, by blending the Platonic and Stoic doctrine with the Peripatetic. He taught and died at Athens. From this time many Platonists studied the writings of Aristotle, and commented upon them; and thus the way was prepared for the formation of the Eclectic sect under *Ammonius Sæca*, who flourished about a century later than *Ammonius* the Peripatetic.⁶

After this time, however, we still meet with several genuine followers of Aristotle, of whom the most celebrated was *Alexander Aphrodisæus*, so called from a town in Caria which gave him birth.⁷ This philosopher penetrated, with so much success, into the meaning of the most profound speculations of his master, that he was not only respected by his contemporaries as an excellent preceptor, but was followed by subsequent Aristotelians among the Greeks, Latins, and Arabians, as the best interpreter of Aristotle. On account of the number and value of his commentaries, he was called, by way of distinction, The Commentator. Under the emperor Septimius Severus he was appointed public professor of the Aristotelian philosophy, but whether

* Suidas. Fab. v. ii. p. 273. v. iv. p. 63.

⁶ Eunap. Proem. Vit. Soph. p. 6. Suidas. Plut. de ex Delph. Fab. v. ii. p. 274. v. iii. p. 330. v. iv. p. 171.

⁷ Suidas. Aphrod. de Anim. Pref. l. 1. De Fato, imt. Topic. l. ii. p. 72. De Anim. l. i. 11. l. ii. 144. l. iii. c. 7. p. 138.

at Athens or Alexandria is uncertain. He flourished about the year 200. Several of his works are still extant, among which is a learned and elegant treatise "On Fate,"⁸ wherein he supports the doctrine of Divine Providence. Upon this head he leaned towards Platonism, but on most other subjects adhered strictly to Aristotle. In his book concerning the Soul, he maintains that it is *ἰδίος τι τῶ ἀσμάτῳ ὁργανωθεῖς, καὶ οὐκ ἐστὶν αὐτῇ καὶ αὐτῇ*, not a distinct substance by itself, but the *form* of an organized body.⁹

Many of the Eclectic philosophers undertook to explain and illustrate the writings of Aristotle, particularly on the subject of dialectics, which Plato had left imperfect. Besides Porphyry, Jamblichus, Plutarchus, Nestorius, and others already mentioned, we may reckon Dexippus, Themistius, Olympiodorus, and Simplicius, among the Eclectic commentators upon Aristotle.¹⁰

Dexippus was a disciple of Jamblichus; but though he gave his name to the Platonic school, he was more inclined to the doctrine of Aristotle than to that of Plato, as appears from his "Reply to the Objections of Plotinus against Aristotle's Categories," a work still extant.¹¹

Themistius, who was born in an obscure town of Paphlagonia, fixed his residence at Constantinople, and taught eloquence and philosophy with great success. He had many disciples, both Pagan and Christian: among the former was Libanius; among the latter, Gregory Nazianzen. He enjoyed the favour of the emperors, by whom he was admitted to the highest honours. Constantius, in the year 355, received him into the senate, and afterwards, in return for an eloquent eulogium, presented him with a brazen statue. Julian received him as a friend, and frequently corresponded with him. In the year 362, he was appointed by this emperor prefect of Constantinople. He enjoyed equal distinction under the succeeding emperors, from whom he obtained by his eloquence whatever he wished. Theodosius the Great, during his visit to the western empire, entrusted Themistius with the care and

⁸ Ed. Lond. 1658.

⁹ Qu. et Sol. l. ii. c. 8.

¹⁰ Euseb. Ecc. Hist. l. vii. c. 32. Niceph. l. vi. c. 36. Hieron. Cat. Scrip. c. 73. Porph. Vit. Plot. c. 14.

¹¹ Simplic. in Categ. p. 1. Suidas.

education of his son, Arcadius. His eloquence, wisdom, and ability in public affairs, united with uncommon gentleness of temper and urbanity of manners, were the foundation of that long course of civil honours by which his life was distinguished. About the year 387, Themistius withdrew, at an advanced age, from public business, and soon after died.¹²

A memorable example of the liberal spirit of Themistius is related by ecclesiastical historians.¹³ The emperor Valens, who favoured the Arian party, inflicted many hardships and sufferings upon the Trinitarians, and daily threatened them with still greater severities. Themistius, to whom these measures were exceedingly displeasing, addressed the emperor upon the subject in an eloquent speech; in which he represented the diversity of opinions among the Christians as inconsiderable, compared with that of the Pagan philosophers; and pleaded, that this diversity could not be displeasing to God, since it did not prevent men from worshipping him with true piety. By these and other arguments Themistius prevailed upon the emperor to treat the Trinitarians with greater lenity.

Themistius illustrated several of the works of Aristotle, particularly the Analytics, the Physics, and the book on the Soul, in commentaries written with great perspicuity and elegance.¹⁴ His "Orations" are strongly marked with the same characters. He is to be distinguished from Themistius, a Christian deacon of Alexandria, who lived after the council of Chalcedon, held in the year 551, and was the head of the sect of the Agnoetæ;¹⁵ so called, because they taught that Christ, the λόγος, was ignorant of many things. There is nothing in the writings of Themistius, the philosopher, from which it can be inferred that he ever deserted the Pagan schools.

In the following century, about the year 430, flourished *Olympiodorus*, an Alexandrian philosopher, celebrated for his knowledge of the Aristotelian doctrine. Proclus, before

¹² Suid. Phot. Cod. 74. Them. Orat. 4. 16, 17. 20, 21. 23. 27. 31. 33. Liban. Epist. i. 139, 140. Jul. ep. ad Them.

¹³ Soerat. l. ix. c. 32. Sozom. l. vi. c. 36. Niceph. l. xi. c. 46.

¹⁴ Fabric. Bib. Gr. v. viii. p. 1. 37. Ed. Venet. 1534. Par. 1684.

¹⁵ Phot. Cod. 108. 23.

he was twenty years of age, attended upon his school. This philosopher is to be distinguished from a Platonist of this name, whose commentary upon Plato is preserved among the manuscripts in the king's library at Paris; and also from a Peripatetic of a later age, who wrote a Commentary upon Aristotle's Meteorology.¹⁵

Simplicius Cilix, a Platonist, who flourished under the emperor Justinian, wrote commentaries upon Aristotle, which discover sound judgment and extensive reading; but his fondness for the Eclectic method of philosophising, led him to mix the Platonic and Stoic with the Peripatetic doctrines. His "Commentary upon the Enchiridion of Epictetus" affords a curious example of this combination of heterogeneous tenets. He strenuously defended Aristotle's doctrine concerning the eternity of the world against Philoponus. Simplicius was one of those Platonists, who, about the beginning of the sixth century, fled from the persecution of the emperor to Chosroës, king of Persia.¹⁶

From the preceding detail, a sufficiently accurate idea may be formed of the fate of the Peripatetic philosophy under the Roman emperors, before it took refuge, as we shall afterwards see, among the Arabians. Under several of the Cæsars, the philosophers of this school shared, with their brethren, the common discouragements and infelicities of oppression. The concise and logical method of philosophising which prevailed in this school, could obtain few admirers at a period remarkable for a loose and florid kind of eloquence. The doctrine, which the Peripatetics of this period had received from their master, suffered much adulteration from the unwearied endeavours of the Alexandrian philosophers to establish an Eclectic system. Notwithstanding the external splendour in which this sect, with several others, appeared under the Antonines, it was from that time impaired by internal disease and corruption. Many bold, but injudicious grammarians and critics attempted to supply chasms, and to clear up obscurities, in the writings of Aristotle, from their own ingenious conjectures, which they presumed to incorporate with the author's text. Even

¹⁵ Suidas. Marin. Vit. Procli, c. 9. ¹⁶ Simp. ad Phys. l. i. com. 12. p. 32, l. iv. com. 53. 141. De Cælo. p. 113. Fabric. Bib. Gr. v. vii. p. 621.

Alexander Aphrodisiens, who professed to restore the genuine Aristotelian system, not confining himself to the doctrine of his master, contributed towards its adulteration. But nothing proved so injurious to the Peripatetic philosophy, as the rage for commenting upon the works of Aristotle, which prevailed among his followers. Notes, paraphrases, arguments, summaries, and dissertations, piled up, century after century, under the general name of Commentaries upon Aristotle, created, as might be expected, endless disputes concerning the meaning of his writings: and it may, perhaps, be asserted with truth, that their genuine sense, after all the pains which have been taken to explore it, yet remains, in many particulars, undiscovered.*

SECT. VI.

Of the State of the Cynic Sect under the Roman Emperors.

THE ancient Cynic sect was instituted, as hath been shewn, rather with a view to exhibit a pattern of philosophical virtues, than to introduce a new system of opinions. For this end, the original authors and supporters of this sect devoted themselves to voluntary poverty, lived upon the charity of the rich, practised the most rigorous abstinence from pleasure, and became censors of public manners. Whilst the Cynics adhered to their original principles and character, they commanded, notwithstanding their forbidding peculiarities, great attention and respect, not only from the vulgar, but even from persons of the highest rank. But, in process of time, their independent spirit rose into insufferable haughtiness and insolence; and their unnatural severity of manners degenerated into a gross contempt of decorum and an impudent freedom of speech. Even so early as the time of Cicero, this sect was fallen into such discredit, that it was

* Vidend. Cozzand. de Magistr. Ant. Ph. l. ii. c. 2. Voss. de Sc. Math. c. 33. § 9. c. 59. § 14. Id. de Hist. Gr. l. ii. c. 4. 15. 20. Grot. Epist. 262. Cleric. Hist. Med. p. iii. c. 9. Jons. l. ii. c. 16. l. vi. c. 19. Ruall. in Vit. Plutarch. c. 7. Meurs. ad Aristoxen. et de Fortuna Attica, c. 8. Labb. Conspect. Interpr. Pl. et Arist. Schelhorn. Amoenit. Lit. P. iii.

his opinion that the whole body ought to be banished from the state, for their shameful violations of modesty.¹⁷ Under the Cæsars, their infamous excesses furnished Lucian with a copious theme for satire.¹⁸ In his fugitives,¹⁹ he draws a humorous picture of those false Cynics, who, without the virtues of Diogenes, carried his singularities to the most extravagant height.

The gross and shameless manners of these pretended philosophers exposed them to ridicule and insult from the lowest and most profligate vulgar. Hence Persius says.²⁰

————— Multum gaudere paratus,
Si Cynico barbam petulans nonaria vellet.²¹

Julian,²² speaking of the Cynics of his time, says, that they led a wandering and brutish life, and were alike troublesome and mischievous by the malignant reproaches which they cast upon the most excellent characters, and by the base adulation which they bestowed upon the most infamous. It is no wonder that this body, so injurious to society, as well as disgraceful to philosophy, was, under the virtuous Antonines, forbidden to hold public schools; and that in the fifth century, as the poet Sidonius intimates,²³ the sect became extinct. In the midst of the numerous herd of Cynics, whose names are forgotten, there were few persons whose singular virtues, or vices, have preserved their names from oblivion.

Musonius, a Babylonian (confounded by Suidas with Musonius the Tuscan, a Stoic philosopher) is ranked by Eunapius²⁴ among the most virtuous and excellent of the modern Cynics. Philostratus speaks of him as next to Apollonius in wisdom, and as an eminent philosopher. His cynical spirit would not permit him to spare the vices of Nero; and the resentment of that tyrant consigned him to prison. Whilst he was in confinement, he formed a friendship with Apollonius, and held a correspondence with him,

¹⁷ De Off. l. i.

¹⁸ Lucian. Diog. et Crates; Vit. Auct. &c.

¹⁹ T. iv. p. 321.

²⁰ Sat. i. v. 133.

²¹ And then, O then, art most supremely blest,

When some wise Cynic's beard becomes a jest. BREWSTER.

²² Orat. 6. 7. Conf. Maxim. Tyr. Diss. 21. Arrian. Diss. Epict. l. iii. c. 22. p. 229.

²³ Carm. 2.

²⁴ In Proem. p. 6.

some specimens of which are preserved by Philostratus. He was, at last, banished to the Isthmus of Greece, and condemned to remain a slave, and to labour daily with the spade. His friend Demetrius, seeing him in this condition, expressed great concern at his misfortunes; upon which Musonius, striking his spade firmly in the ground, said, "Why, Demetrius, do you lament to see me digging in the Isthmus? You might lament, if you saw me, like Nero, playing upon the harp."²⁵ Julian speaks with admiration of his magnanimity.²⁶ The time of his death is uncertain; and none of his writings remain.²⁷

Demetrius of Corinth,²⁸ the friend of Musonius, was also banished from Rome in the time of Nero, for his free censure of public manners. After the death of this emperor he returned to Rome; but the boldness of his language soon offended Vespasian, and again deprived him of his liberty. Apollonius, with whom he had contracted a friendship, prevailed upon Titus to recal him; but under Domitian he shared the common fate of the philosophers, and withdrew to Puteoli. Seneca, who was intimately acquainted with Demetrius, speaks in the highest terms of panegyric concerning his masculine eloquence, sound judgment, intrepid fortitude, and inflexible integrity. "Leaving," says he, "the nobles clad in purple, I converse with, and admire, the half-naked Demetrius: and why do I admire him, but because I perceive, that in the midst of his poverty he wants nothing!—When I hear this excellent man discoursing from his couch of straw, I perceive in him, not a preceptor only, but a witness of the truth; and I cannot doubt, that Providence has endued him with such virtues and talents, that he might be an example, and a monitor, to the present age."²⁹ Demetrius laid down to himself this prudent maxim, That it is better to have a few precepts of wisdom always at hand for use, than to learn many things which cannot be applied to practice. He attended Thræseas Pæstus in his last moments, before his execution, and for-

²⁵ Vit. Apoll. l. iv. c. 35. 46. l. v. c. 19. l. vii. c. 11. 16. Suidas.

²⁶ Epist. ad. Themist. p. 262.

²⁷ Fab. Bib. Gr. v. ii. p. 365.

²⁸ Eunap. Vit. Soph. p. 7. Philost. l. iv. c. 42. l. v. c. 19. l. vi. c. 30. l. vii. c. 11. Suet. in Vesp. c. 13. Aul. Gell. l. xv. c. 11. Arrian. Ep. l. i. c. 26.

²⁹ Sen. de Vit. Beat. c. 26.

fixed his mind by conversing with him upon subjects of philosophy.³⁰

Among the Cynics of this period is commonly reckoned, both by ancient and modern writers, *Oenomaus*; who wrote a treatise to expose the frauds and impostures of Oracles, and another, to censure the degeneracy of the later Cynics. He flourished under Adrian. His writings are not extant.³¹

A distinguished place among the genuine Cynics, who were friends to virtue, appears to be due to *Demonax*; whose history, though related only by Lucian,³² deserves credit, since it is not probable that the Satirist, who lived at the same period, would have ventured to give a false narrative of a well-known character, or that he would have gone so far out of his usual track of satire, merely to draw a fictitious portrait of a good man. *Demonax*, according to Lucian, was born in Cyprus. His parents were possessed of wealth and rank; but he aspired after higher honours in the study of wisdom, and the practice of virtue. Early in life he removed to Athens, where he afterwards continued to reside. In his youth he was intimately conversant with the poets, and committed the most valuable part of their writings to memory. When he engaged in the study of philosophy, he did not lightly skim over the surface of subjects, but made himself perfect master of the tenets of the several sects. In his habit and manner of living, *Demonax* resembled *Diogenes*, and is therefore properly ranked among the Cynics; but he imitated *Socrates* in making philosophy, not a speculative science, but a rule of life and manners. He never openly espoused the doctrines of any particular sect, but took from each whatever tenets he judged most favourable to moral wisdom. Avoiding all ridiculous singularity, disgusting severity, and forbidding haughtiness, he associated freely with all, and conversed with such graceful ease, that persuasion might be said to dwell upon his lips. He possessed the happy art of rendering even reproof acceptable; like a prudent physician, curing the disease with-

³⁰ Sen. Ep. 20. 62. 67. 91. De Benes. l. vii. c. 1. 8, & 11. Qu. Nat. l. iv. Praef. de Prov. c. 4, 5. Tacit. Annal. xv. c. ult.

³¹ Suidas. Fabr. B. Gr. v. ii. p. 365. Jul. Orat. vi. vii.

³² In *Demonacte*, t. ii. p. 560.

out fretting the patient. His simple manner of living gave him perfect independance; and his virtues procured him such a degree of influence, that he was often employed in settling domestic dissensions. His philanthropy was universal; and he never withdrew his regard from any, but such as would not be persuaded to forsake their vices. So perfect was his equanimity, that nothing ever deeply affected him, except the sickness or death of a friend. He lived nearly to the age of an hundred years, without suffering pain or disease, or becoming burthensome to any one. In extreme old age he went from house to house, wherever he pleased, and was every where received with respect. As he passed along the streets, the sellers of bread would beg him to accept of some from their hands; and children would offer him fruits, and call him father. He died with the same placid countenance with which he had been accustomed to meet his friends. The Athenians honoured his body with a public funeral, which was attended by a numerous train of philosophers and others, who all lamented the loss of so excellent a man. If this picture, which is that of Lucian, in miniature, was originally taken from real life, the biographer had some reason to speak of Demonax as the best philosopher he ever knew.

From the anecdotes of Demonax, related by Lucian, we shall select the following:—Soon after Demonax came to Athens, a public charge was brought against him for neglecting to offer sacrifice to Minerva, and to be initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries. Appearing before the assembly in a white garment, he pleaded, that Minerva did not stand in need of his offerings; and that he declined initiation into the mysteries, because, if they were bad he ought not to conceal them, and if they were good, his love to mankind would oblige him to disclose them: upon which he was acquitted. One of his companions proposing to go to the temple of Esculapius, to pray for the recovery of his son from sickness, Demonax said, “Do you suppose that Esculapius cannot hear you as well from this place?” Hearing two ignorant pretenders to philosophy conversing, and remarking that the one asked foolish questions, and the other made replies which were nothing to the purpose, he said, “One of these men is milking a he-goat, while the other is

holding a sieve under him." Advising a certain rhetorician, who was a wretched declaimer, to perform frequent exercises, the rhetorician answered, "I frequently practise by myself." "No wonder," replied Demonax, "that you are so bad a speaker, when you practise before so foolish an audience." Seeing a Spartan beating his servant unmercifully, he said to him, "Why do you thus put yourself upon a level with your slave?" When Demonax was informed that the Athenians had thoughts of erecting an amphitheatre for gladiators, in imitation of the Corinthians, he went to the assembly, and cried out, "Athenians, before you make this resolution, go and pull down the Altar of Mercy."

Of a character very different from that of Demonax was *Crescens*, a Megalopolitan. He even disgraced the name of Cynic by his infamous practices; nevertheless, he declaimed eloquently in praise of abstinence, magnanimity, and contempt of death. *Crescens* is mentioned by Tatian, Justin Martyr, and Jerom; as a vile calumniator of the Christians. His malicious accusation of Justin for atheism before the magistrate, crowned that illustrious ornament of the Christian church with the honours of martyrdom.³³

About this period lived *Peregrinus*, of Parium in Pontus. Lucian, relating the particulars of his life,³⁴ says, that after having been guilty of many enormities, he became a Christian, and obtained a temporary credit among the Christians in Palestine; but that returning to his old habits he was dismissed from their society, and went to Egypt, where, in the character of a mendicant Cynic, he practised the most extravagant exploits of fanaticism; that he afterwards roved about through Italy and Greece, pouring forth the most impudent invectives against men of rank, and even against the emperor himself; and that, at last, to procure himself an immortal name, he went to the Olympic games, and, in the presence of a vast concourse of spectators, raised a funeral pile, upon which, in imitation of Hercules, he devoted himself to voluntary death. It is very probable, that in this account the satirist has not given a just representation of the character of *Peregrinus*; for

³³ Tatian. Or. adv. Græc. p. 157. Just. Apol. i. p. 46. Euseb. Hist. Ecc. i. iv. c. 16. Syncell. p. 351. Phot. Cod. 125. Hieron. Cat. Script. c. 23. ³⁴ De Morte Peregrini. t. iv. p. 268. Athenag. legat. c. 23.

Antus Gellius³⁵ speaks of him as a philosopher of reputation in Athens, who was admired for his constancy, and whose moral lectures were much frequented. The story of his last mad adventure is probably true.³⁶ Eusebius relates, that he committed himself to the flames in the year 168.

The last name, which remains to be added to the list of ancient Cynics, is that of *Salustius*, a Syrian, who flourished about the beginning of the sixth century. After having studied and practised eloquence, he attended upon Proclus at Athens, and was instructed by him in the Alexandrian philosophy. But, being disgusted with the futile speculations, and the chaotic confusion of this school, he determined to adopt a kind of philosophy, which he judged to be better suited to the purposes of human life, and addicted himself to the Cynic sect. Leaving Athens, he went with Isidorus to Alexandria, where he freely censured the vices of the times, and inveighed, with great acrimony, against the speculative philosophers of every sect. A treatise "*On the Gods*," edited by Gale in his *Opuscula Mythologica*, was, probably, not the work of this Salustius, but of a Platonist of the same name, who lived in the time of Julian.³⁷

SECT. VII.

The State of the Stoic Sect under the Roman Emperors

THE Stoic philosophy, which had obtained so much authority during the Roman republic, especially among the professors of the law, continued to flourish under the emperors, till after the reigns of the Antonines. Its ethical doctrine became the permanent basis of the Roman jurisprudence: and the high tone of wisdom and virtue, which it assumed, induced many persons of great distinction and eminent merit to declare themselves of the Stoic sect, or at least to prefer its moral system to that of any other school. The

³⁵ Nect. Att. l. viii. c. 3. l. xii. c. 11.

³⁶ Tatian. Or. adv. Gr. c. 41.

³⁷ Philostr. Vit. Soph. l. ii. c. 1. § 13. Euseb. Chron. Ol. 236.

³⁸ Suidas. Phot. Cod. 242. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. xiii. p. 643.

prevalence of the Christian doctrine at this period seems to have contributed, in no small degree, to the success of Stoicism, by leading its followers, to whom the language and tenets of Christianity could not be unknown, to soften the extravagances of their own system, and to clothe its dogmas in a more popular dress. Add to this, that the Stoic sect acquired great credit and authority from the illustrious examples of many persons of both sexes, who, in these times of civil oppression, bravely encountered death in the cause of liberty and virtue. Among the heroines of this age, Tacitus mentions the two Arrias, the wives of Cæcina Pætus and Thræseas, and Fannia the wife of Helvidius. From these and other causes, the Stoic sect, in the time of Juvenal, prevailed almost through the whole Roman empire.

——— Melius nos

Zenonis præcepta monent, nec enim omnia quædam
Pro vita facienda putat, sed Cantaber unde
Stoicus, antiqui præsertim ætate Metelli?

Nunc totus Graias nostrasque habet orbis Athenas.*

Under Antoninus Pius schools of Stoicism were supported at the public expense in Athens, Alexandria, and probably too at Rome; for Antoninus, after he came to the purple, visited the house of Apollonius the Stoic to study philosophy.³⁹ At Tarsus, in Cilicia, there was also a Stoic school, which produced several celebrated philosophers, afterwards to be mentioned.

But, notwithstanding the general credit which the Stoic doctrine obtained, it met with powerful opposition from several quarters; particularly from the Sceptics, who were ingenious, and indefatigable in their endeavours to overturn every dogmatic system; and from the Alexandrian

* Sat. xv. v. 108.

• Zeno indeed has taught us sounder wit,
“Better to die than a vile deed commit.”
But how should Spaniards know the Stoic lore?
Which Rome e’en knew not in those days of yore.
Learning indeed is now more widely spread,
And Greek and Latin every where are read.

OWEN.

³⁹ Lucian in Eunuch. t. iv. p. 160. Capitolin. in Anton. P. c. 11. in Aurel. c. 10. Xiphil. in Ant. Strabo. l. xiv. p. 673. Athen. l. iv. p. 186.

sect, which, by its destructive plan of coalition, corrupted the genuine doctrine of every other school. From the period when the motley Eclectic system was established, Stoicism began to decline; and in the age of Augustine it no longer subsisted as a distinct sect. It was only during the short space of two hundred years, that the Roman school of Zeno was adorned with illustrious names which claim a place in the history of philosophy.⁴⁰

The first Stoic who merits attention in this period is *Athenodorus*,⁴¹ of Tarsus, in Cilicia. He lived at Rome, and on account of his learning, wisdom, and moderation, was highly esteemed by Augustus. His opinion and advice had great weight with the emperor, and are said to have led him into a milder plan of government than he had at first adopted. He obtained from his fellow citizens, the inhabitants of Tarsus, relief from a part of the burden of taxes which had been imposed upon them, and was on this account honoured with an annual festival. Athenodorus was entrusted by Augustus with the education of the young prince Claudius; and, that he might the more successfully execute his charge, his illustrious pupil became, for a while, a resident in his house. This philosopher retired in his old age to Tarsus, where he died in his eighty-second year.

At the beginning of the reign of Nero lived and taught at Rome *Annæus Cornutus*,⁴² an African; a name not without distinction in the family of the Stoics. He excelled in criticism and poetry; but his principal study was philosophy. His merit, as a teacher of the Stoic doctrine, sufficiently appears from his having been the preceptor of that honest advocate for virtue, the satirist Persius. How highly the master was esteemed by his pupil may be inferred from the following passage, among many others:

Cumque iter ambiguum est, et vitæ nescius error
Deducit trepidas ramosa in compita mentes
Me tibi supposui: teneros tu suscipis annos
Socratico, Cornufe, sinu; tunc fallere solers

⁴⁰ Euseb. Prep. l. xiv. c. 2. Phot. Cod. 124. Aug. adv. Acad. l. iii. c. 18.

⁴¹ Fab. Bib. Gr. v. ii. p. 391. Zosim. l. i. c. 6. Lucian. in Macrob. t. ii. p. 829. Suet. in Claud. c. 4. Suidas.

⁴² Suidas. A. Gell. l. ii. c. 6. l. ix. c. 10. Fab. Bib. Gr. v. ii. p. 401.

*Apposita intortos extendit regula mores :
Et premitur ratione animus, vincique laborat,
Artificemque tuo ducit sub pollice vultum.*⁴³

Persius, dying before his master, left him his library, with a considerable sum of money ; but Cornutus, accepting only the books, gave the money to the sisters of Persius. The poet Lucan was also one of his pupils. Under Nero, Cornutus was driven into exile for his freedom of speech. The emperor having written several books in verse upon the affairs of Rome, and his flatterers advising him to continue the poem, this honest Stoic had the courage to remark, that he doubted whether so large a work would be read ; and when it was urged, that Chrysippus had written as much, he replied, " His writings were useful to mankind." After such an unpardonable offence against imperial vanity, the only wonder was, that Cornutus escaped with life.⁴⁴

Caius Musonius Rufus,⁴⁵ a Tuscan of equestrian rank, who enjoyed military honours, was a great admirer of the Stoic philosophy, and took much pains to disseminate its principles and precepts among the Roman youth, particularly among the officers of the army. The attempt was ridiculed by some, and offended others. Nero, who, perhaps, did not himself escape the admonitions of this bold

⁴³ Sat. v. ver. 34.

* Scarce had I reach'd the slippery point of life,
Where vice and virtue wage a doubtful strife ;
Where inexperience flexile youth betrays,
And leads it devious through her mazy ways ;
But lo ! Cornutus, thy directing hand
Sudden I sought, I stoop'd to thy command :
On thy Socratic bosom lay reclin'd,
While wholesome precepts form'd the list'ning mind.
Thy standard rule with nice address applied,
Corrected every thought that warp'd aside,
My soul by reason's force convicted stood,
Its error saw, and strove to be subdued.
Thy abler skill submissive it obey'd ;
It took the stamp thy forming finger made.

BREWSTER.

⁴⁴ A. Gell. l. vi. c. 2. Dio, l. lxii. p. 716. Euseb. Ecc. H. l. vi. c. 19. Suidas. Gale. Opusc. Myth. Pref.

⁴⁵ Suidas. Tacit. Ann. l. iv. c. 10. 40. l. xiv. c. 59, 60. Hist. l. iij. c. 81. Philostr. Vit. Apol. l. vii. c. 16. Xiphil. et Zen. in Vesp. Orig. adv. Cels. l. iij. p. 156.

reformer, was displeased at his freedom, and banished him to Gyara. He was afterwards, however, recalled by Vespasian: and that emperor was so well pleased with his conduct, particularly in his strenuous opposition to the measures of Egnotius Celer, a man universally detested, that when, at the instigation of Mucian, he banished the philosophers from Rome and Italy, Musonius alone was permitted to remain in the city. His philosophy, like that of Socrates, was adapted to the purposes of life and manners, as may be inferred from a dissertation which he has left "On the Exercise of the Mind," preserved by Stobæus.⁴⁶

Among the Stoics of this period we must also reckon *Chæremon*,⁴⁷ an Egyptian, who in his youth had the charge of the Alexandrian library, but afterwards removed to Rome, where he was employed, with Alexander Ægeres, as one of the preceptors of Nero. Under his name the epigrammatist Martial⁴⁸ ridicules the whole sect of the Stoics for their contempt of riches; but it is not probable that Chæremon was ever in that state of poverty which the poet describes. This philosopher wrote a book concerning comets, quoted by Origen; and an account of the Egyptian hieroglyphics and priesthood, of which a curious fragment is preserved by Porphyry.

In the whole school of Zeno, there is no name more highly celebrated than that of Seneca; and whether we consider his natural abilities, his extensive erudition, or the number and merit of his writings, this philosopher is certainly entitled to particular attention.

Lucius Annæus Seneca was a native of Corduba, an ancient and flourishing Roman settlement in Spain.⁴⁹ His father, Marcus Annæus Seneca, a man of equestrian rank, was a celebrated orator; his mother's name was Heluia. He was born about fifteen years before the death of Augustus, or the year before the commencement of the Christian era;⁵⁰ and was brought to Rome, while a child, pro-

⁴⁶ Serm. 117.

⁴⁷ Suidas. Euseb. Prep. l. v. c. 10. l. xi. c. 57. Porph. *επι ἀστρολογίας*, l. iv. p. 360. Orig. adv. Cels. l. i. p. 46. Sen. Qu. Nat. l. vii. c. 5.

⁴⁸ L. xi. Ep. 57.

⁴⁹ Plin. Hist. N. l. iii. c. 1. Strabo, l. iii. Tac. Ann. l. xiv. c. 54.

⁵⁰ Qu. Nat. l. i. c. 1.

bably for education, by his aunt, who accompanied him on account of the delicate state of his health.⁵¹ His first studies were devoted by his father to eloquence; but his mind, naturally disposed towards serious and weighty pursuits, soon passed over from words to things; and he chose rather to reason with the philosophers, than to declaim with the rhetoricians. This propensity was displeasing to his father, who, having himself no taste for philosophy, thought it a frivolous study, and had no other object of ambition, either for himself or his children, than eloquence. His son Junius Gallio succeeded in this pursuit, and was celebrated for the melody of his elocution: but Lucrus was not to be diverted from his purpose of devoting himself to wisdom. Sotion, a philosopher, who, though of the Pythagorean sect, inclined to the Stoic doctrine concerning morals, was fixed upon as his preceptor. But whether it was that Seneca was disgusted with the severity of the Pythagoric discipline, or that he was dissatisfied with the obscure dogmas of this school, he soon forsook Sotion, and became a disciple of Attalus, a Stoic; at the same time, occasionally conversing with philosophers of other sects, and freely examining the writings, or doctrines, of the several founders of the Grecian schools. Through his father's importunity, he for a short time interrupted his philosophical studies to engage in the business of the courts; and we are assured by so good a judge as Quintilian, that, whilst he continued to plead, his speeches, if deficient in some of the graces of oratory, abounded with that good sense and strength of thought, which are the basis of eloquence.⁵²

Thus furnished with plentiful stores of learning, and with a competent skill in the art of speaking, Seneca, as soon as he arrived at the age of manhood, aspired to the honours of the state. The first office with which he was invested was that of Quæstor; but at what time he obtained it is uncertain.⁵³ From this time, his good fortune made rapid

⁵¹ Conf. ad Helv. c. 16. Ep. 108.

⁵² Dial. de Caus. Corr. Eloq. De Vit. Beat. c. 3. De Benef. l. ii. c. 17. l. iv. c. 7. De Prov. c. 5. Qu. Nat. l. iii. c. 29. Ep. 9. 18. 21. 33. 41. 45. 48. 58. 65. 75. 89. 94. 97. 100. 107.

⁵³ Conf. ad Helv. c. 16.

advances; and he soon rose to distinction in the court of Claudius: but the particulars of his public life, during this period, are no where preserved. Hence it is impossible to discover with certainty the cause of the charge, which was publicly brought against him, of adultery with Julia, the daughter of Germanicus, and wife of Vinicius. It is probable, however, from the infamous character of Messalina,⁵⁴ who instigated the prosecution, that he was accused without any sufficient ground. The affair, notwithstanding, terminated in his banishment; and Seneca, after having for many years enjoyed the favour of the emperor, and been distinguished among the great, was obliged to remain eight years an exile in the island of Corsica. Here, if we are to credit his own account, he passed his time agreeably, devoting himself entirely to the study of philosophy and elegant learning. In a letter to his mother, he says,⁵⁵ "Be assured that I am as cheerful and happy, as in the days of my greatest prosperity: I may indeed call my present days such; since my mind, free from care, is at leisure for its favourite pursuits, and can either amuse itself with lighter studies, or, in its eager search after truth, rise to the contemplation of its own nature, and that of the universe." But it may be questioned, whether Stoic ostentation had not some share in dictating this report; for we find him, in another place, expressing much distress on account of his misfortune, and courting the emperor in a strain of servile adulation, little worthy of so eminent a philosopher.

Agrippina, the second wife of Claudius, whose character was the reverse of that of Messalina, employed her interest with the emperor in favour of Seneca; and not only obtained his recal from banishment, but prevailed upon Claudius to confer upon him the honourable office of prætor.⁵⁶ Her inducement to this measure appears to have been a desire of engaging a philosopher of so much distinction and merit to undertake the education of her son. Probably, too, she hoped, by attaching Seneca to her family, to strengthen Nero's interest in the state; for the Roman people would, of course, entertain high expectations from

⁵⁴ Suet. in Calig. c. 19. in Claud. c. 29. Dio. l. lx. Tacit. Ann. l. xiii. c. 42.

⁵⁵ Consol. ad Hel. c. 4, ad Polyb. c. 21.

⁵⁶ Tacit. Ann. l. xii. c. 8.

a prince educated under such a master. Afranius Burrhus, a prætorian præfect, was joined with Seneca in this important charge: and these two preceptors, who were intrusted with equal authority, and had each his respective department, executed their trust with perfect harmony, and with some degree of success; Burrhus instructing his pupil in the military art, and inuring him to wholesome discipline; Seneca furnishing him with the principles of philosophy, and the precepts of wisdom and eloquence; and both endeavouring to confine their pupil within the limits of decorum and virtue.⁷⁷ Whilst these preceptors united their authority, Nero was restrained from indulging his natural propensities; but after the death of Burrhus, the influence of Seneca declined, and the young prince began to disclose that depravity, which afterwards stained his character with eternal infamy.⁷⁸

Still, however, Seneca enjoyed the favour of his prince; and, after Nero was advanced to the empire, he long continued to load his preceptor with honours and riches. Partly from inheritance and marriage, but chiefly through imperial munificence, he possessed a large estate, and lived in great splendour.⁷⁹ Juvenal speaks of

———— Senecæ prædivitis hortos.⁸⁰

A superb mansion at Rome, delightful country seats, rich furniture, including, as Dio particularly mentions, five hundred cedar tables with ivory feet, uniform and of excellent workmanship,⁸¹ were articles of luxury hitherto unusual among philosophers; and were thought by many not very consistent with that high tone of indifference, in which the Stoics, and among the rest Seneca himself, spoke of external good. Sullius, one of his enemies,⁸² asked by what wisdom, or by what precepts of philosophy, Seneca had been able, during four years of imperial favour, to amass the immense sum of three hundred thousand *sestertia*.⁸³

Seneca perceived the gathering clouds of jealousy and envy: and saw that his sovereign himself, whose vices

⁷⁷ Tacit. Ann. l. xiii. c. 2.

⁷⁸ Tac. Ann. l. xiv. c. 52.

⁷⁹ Consol. ad Helv. c. 2. Tac. Ann. l. xiv. c. 53.

⁸⁰ Sat. ix.

⁸¹ The gardens of the wealthy Seneca.

⁸² Dio. l. lx. Ep. 67.

⁸³ Tac. Ann. l. xiii. c. 42. 52, 53.

⁸⁴ £ 2,421,875.

were now become too imperious to endure restraint, was disposed to listen to the whispers of obloquy. In hopes of escaping the destruction which threatened him, he earnestly requested the emperor's permission to withdraw from the court, and devote the remainder of his days to philosophy: he even offered to refund the immense treasures which royal bounty had lavished upon him, and to retire with a bare competency. Nero rejected his proposal, and assured him of the continuance of his favour; but the philosopher knew the emperor's disposition too well to rely upon his promises. From this time Seneca declined all ceremonious visits, avoided company, and, under the pretence of indisposition, or a desire of prosecuting his studies, confined himself almost entirely to his own house.⁶⁴

It was not long before Seneca was convinced, that in distrusting a tyrant, whose mind was wholly occupied by suspicion, he had acted prudently. Antonius Natalis, who had been concerned in the conspiracy of Piso, upon his examination, in order to court the favour of Nero, or perhaps even at his instigation, mentioned Seneca among the number of the conspirators. This single evidence was by the tyrant deemed sufficient against the man, to whom he had been indebted for his education, and whom he had called his friend. To give some colour to the accusation, Natalis pretended, that he had been sent by Piso to visit Seneca whilst he was sick, and to complain of his having refused to see Piso, who as a friend might have expected free access to him upon all occasions; and that Seneca, in reply, had said, that frequent conversations could be of no service to either party, but that he considered his own safety as involved in that of Piso. Granus Sylvanus, tribune of the prætorian cohort, was sent to ask Seneca, whether he recollected what had passed between himself and Natalis. Seneca, whether by accident or design is uncertain, had that day left Campania, and was at his country-seat, about four miles from the city. In the evening, while he was at supper with his wife Paulina and two friends, the tribune, attended by a military band, came to the house, and, after giving the soldiers orders to surround

⁶⁴ Tac. Ann. l. xiv. c. 53. 56. Suet. in Ner. c. 35.

it, delivered the emperor's message. Seneca's answer was, That he had received a complaint from Piso, of his having refused to see him; and that the state of his health, which required repose, had been his apology. He added, that he saw no reason why he should prefer the safety of any other individual to his own; and that no one was better acquainted than Nero with his independent spirit.

This reply kindled the emperor's indignation; and he asked the messenger, whether Seneca discovered any intention of putting an end to his own life. The tribune assured him, that there was no appearance either of terror, or of distress in his countenance, or language. Upon this the tyrant, who felt his own pusillanimity reproached by the constancy of the philosopher, ordered him to return without delay to Seneca, with his peremptory command, immediately to put himself to death. Silvanus, who had himself been one of the conspirators, had not the courage to meet the face of Seneca upon such an embassy, but sent the fatal message by one of his centurions. The philosopher received it with perfect composure, and asked permission of the officer to alter his will. This indulgence being refused him, he turned to his friends, and requested, that, since he was not allowed to leave them any other legacy, they would preserve in their memory a portrait of his life, as a perpetual monument of friendship. At the same time he restrained their tears, and exhorted them to exercise that fortitude, which they had professed to learn in the school of philosophy. "Where are now," said he, "our boasted precepts of wisdom? where the armour, which we have been so many years providing against adverse fate? Who among us has been a stranger to the savage spirit of Nero? After murdering his mother, and his brother, it was not to be expected that he would spare his preceptor."

Having conversed in this manner, for some time, with his friends, Seneca embraced his wife, and earnestly entreated her to moderate her grief, and after his death to console herself with the recollection of his virtues: but Paullina refused every consolation, except that of dying with her husband, and earnestly solicited the friendly hand of the executioner. Seneca, after expressing his admira-

tion of his wife's fortitude, proceeded to obey the emperor's fatal mandate, by opening a vein in each arm: but, through his advanced age, the vital stream flowed so reluctantly, that it was necessary also to open the veins of his legs. Still finding his strength exhausted without any prospect of a speedy release; in order to alleviate, if possible, the anguish of his wife, who was a spectator of the scene, and to save himself the torture of witnessing her distress, he persuaded her to withdraw to another chamber. In this situation, Seneca, with wonderful recollection and self-command, dictated many philosophical reflections to his secretary. After a long interval, his friend Statius Anæus, to whom he complained of the tedious delay of death, ministered to him a strong dose of poison; but even this, through the feeble state of his vital powers, produced little effect. At last, he ordered the attendants to convey him into a warm bath; and, as he entered, he sprinkled those who stood near, saying, "I offer this libation to Jupiter the deliverer." Then, plunging into the bath, he was soon suffocated. His body was consumed, according to his own express order, in a will which he had made in the height of his prosperity, without any funeral pomp.⁶⁵

Such was the end of Seneca; an end not unworthy the purest and best principles of the Stoic philosophy.

The character, the system, and the writings of this philosopher, have been subjects of much dispute among the learned. Concerning his character, a candid judge, who considers the virtuous sentiments with which his writings abound, the temperate and abstemious plan of life which he pursued in the midst of a luxurious court,⁶⁶ and the fortitude with which he met his fate, will not hastily pronounce him to have been guilty of adultery, upon the evidence of the infamous Messalina; or conclude his wealth to have been the reward of a servile compliance with the base passions of his prince. It has been questioned, whether Seneca ought to be ranked among the Stoic or the Eclectic philosophers; and the freedom of judgment which he expressly claims, together with the respect which he

⁶⁵ Tacit. l. xv. Ann. c. 62.

⁶⁶ Ep. 108. 87. 104. 112. Tacit. Ann. l. xv. c. 45. 63. l. xiii. c. 3. l. xiv. c. 7. Qu. Nat. l. iii. c. 7. Conf. Dio. l. lxi. Xiphistn.

pays to philosophers of different sects, clearly prove, that he did not implicitly addict himself to the system of Zeno; nor can the contrary be inferred from his speaking of *our* Chrysippus, and *our* Cleanthes; for he speaks also of *our* Demetrius, and *our* Epicurus. It is evident, however, from the general tenor and spirit of his writings, that he adhered, in the main, to the Stoic system.⁶⁷ With respect to his writings, as it is not our proper business to examine their literary merit, we shall content ourselves with remarking, that, although he is justly censured by Quintilian,⁶⁸ and other critics, as among the Romans the first corrupter of style, his works are, nevertheless, exceedingly valuable, on account of the great number of just and beautiful moral sentiments which they contain, the extensive erudition which they discover, and the happy mixture of freedom and urbanity, with which they censure vice and inculcate good morals. The writings of Seneca, except his Books of "Physical Questions," are chiefly of the moral kind: they consist of one hundred and twenty-four "Epistles," and distinct Treatises, "On Anger; Consolation; Providence; Tranquillity of Mind; Constancy; Clemency; the Shortness of Life; a Happy Life; Retirement; Benefits."⁶⁹

Among the more celebrated Stoics, who lived in the time of Nero, we must also reckon *Dio of Prusa* in Bithynia, called for his eloquence Chrysostom. Under Nero and Vespasian he followed the profession of a Sophist; and in his juvenile orations, he treated light subjects in a declamatory and luxuriant style, and frequently inveighed against the most illustrious poets and philosophers of antiquity. This raised no small degree of ill will against him, which induced him to leave Rome, and withdraw to Egypt. From this time he assumed the character of a Stoic philosopher; but he retained so much of his former manner, that he embellished his philosophical discourses, which turned chiefly upon moral topics, with the graces of eloquence. Both his doctrine and practice being strictly conformable to the principles of virtue, he was a bold censor of vice, and spared no individual on account of his rank. His

⁶⁷ Ep. 96. 78. 41. Conf. ad Marc. c. xix. 25.

⁶⁸ Inst. l. x. c. 1. Conf. Plin. H. N. l. iv. c. 14. A. Gell. l. xii. c. 2.

⁶⁹ Fabr. Bib. Lat. t. i. p. 32.

freedom of speech offended Domitian; and he went into voluntary exile in Thrace, where he lived in great poverty, and was obliged to support himself by servile labour. After the death of Domitian, he returned to Rome, and remained a short time concealed; but, finding the soldiers inclined to sedition, he suddenly brought to their remembrance Dio the orator and philosopher, by haranguing them in a strain of manly eloquence, which soon subdued the tumult. Both Nerva and Trajan admitted him to their confidence, and the former distinguished him by public tokens of favour. He lived to old age; but the time of his death is uncertain. The "Orations" of Dio are still extant, from which it appears that he was a man of sound judgment and lively fancy, and that he happily united in his style the qualities of animation and sweetness.⁷⁰

*Euphrates*⁷¹ of Alexandria, was a friend of Dio and of Apollonius Tyaneus, who introduced him to Vespasian. This emperor, on some occasion, preferring the opinion of Euphrates to that of Apollonius, a violent quarrel arose between these two philosophers; whence Philostratus, the panegyrist of the latter, inveighs against Euphrates with great severity: but it appears from the testimony of Epictetus, Pliny the younger, and Eusebius, that he was universally esteemed for his talents and virtues. Pliny's character of this philosopher is too interesting to be omitted. "If ever polite learning flourished at Rome, it certainly does at present. Of this I could give you many instances; but I will content myself with naming only Euphrates the philosopher. When, in my youth, I served in the army in Syria, I had an opportunity of conversing familiarly with this excellent man, and took some pains to gain his affection; though that indeed was not difficult; for he is exceedingly open to access, and full of that gentleness of manners which he teaches. Euphrates is possessed of shining talents, which cannot fail to interest even the unlearned. He discourses with great accuracy, dignity, and

⁷⁰ Eunap. in Proem. Philostr. Vit. Soph. l. i. c. 7, 8. Vit. Apoll. l. v. c. 31, 40. Synesii Op. p. 35, 37. Petav. Phot. Cod. 209. Dion. Orat. 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 21, 22, 30, 31, 71, 72, 80.

⁷¹ Eunap. in Proem. Philostrat. Vit. Apoll. l. v. c. 23, 33, l. vi. c. 7. 13. l. viii. c. 3.

elegance, and frequently rises into the sublimity and luxuriance of Plato himself. His style is copious and diversified, and so wonderfully sweet, as to captivate even the most reluctant auditor. Add to all this, his graceful form, comely aspect, long hair, and large white beard; circumstances which, though they may probably be thought trifling and accidental, contribute, however, to procure him much reverence. There is no disgusting negligence in his dress; his countenance is grave, but not austere; his approach commands respect, without creating awe. With the strictest sanctity he unites the most perfect politeness of manners. He inveighs against vice, not against men; and, without chastising, reclaims the offender. You listen with fixed attention to his exhortations, and even when convinced, still hang with eagerness upon his lips.⁷²

If this testimony to the uncommon merit of Euphrates be compared with the praises bestowed upon him by Epictetus⁷³ and Eusebius,⁷⁴ the censures of Philostratus will appear deserving of nothing but contempt. In conformity to the principles of the Stoic philosophy, Euphrates, when he found his strength worn out by disease and old age, voluntarily put a period to his life by drinking hemlock, having first, for some unknown reason, obtained permission from the emperor Adrian.⁷⁵

Another illustrious ornament of the Stoic school, who claims respectful attention both for his wisdom and his virtues, is *Epictetus*.⁷⁶ This eminent philosopher was born at Hierapolis in Phrygia, in a servile condition, and was sold as a slave to Epaphroditus, one of Nero's domestics. Ancient writers are agreed that Epictetus was lame, but differ with respect to the cause of his lameness. Suidas says, that he lost one of his legs when he was young, in consequence of a defluxion; Simplicius asserts, that he was born lame; Celsus relates, that, when his master, in order to torture him, bended his leg, Epictetus, without discovering any sign of fear, said to him, "You will break it:" and when his tormentor had broken the leg, he only

⁷² Plin. Ep. l. i. ep. 10.

⁷³ Arrian l. iv. c. 8. p. 427.

⁷⁴ Adv. Hierocl. c. 33.

⁷⁵ Dio. l. lxxix.

⁷⁶ Simplic. Proem. comm. in Enchir. Ep. Suidas. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. iii. p. 269.

said, "Did I not tell you, you would break it?" Others ascribe his lameness to the heavy chains with which his master loaded him.⁷⁷

Having, at length, by some means which are not related, obtained his manumission, Epictetus retired to a small hut within the city of Rome, where, with nothing more than the bare necessities of life, he devoted himself to the study of philosophy. Here he passed his days entirely alone, till his humanity led him to take the charge of a child, whom a friend of his had through poverty exposed, and to provide it with a nurse. Having furnished himself, by diligent study, with a competent knowledge of the principles of the Stoic philosophy, and having received instructions in rhetoric from Rufus, who is said to have been a bold and successful corrector of public manners, Epictetus, notwithstanding his poverty, became a popular moral preceptor. He was an acute and judicious observer of manners. His eloquence was simple, majestic, nervous, and penetrating. His doctrine inculcated the purest morals; and his life was an admirable pattern of sobriety, magnanimity, and the most rigid virtue.⁷⁸

Neither his humble station, nor his singular merit, could, however, screen Epictetus from the tyranny of the monster Domitian. With the rest of the philosophers he was banished, under a mock decree of the senate, from Italy. But he bore his exile with a degree of firmness, worthy of a philosopher who called himself a citizen of the world, and could boast that, wherever he went, he carried his best treasures along with him. At Nicopolis, the place which he chose for his residence, he prosecuted his design of correcting vice and folly by the precepts of philosophy. Wherever he could obtain an auditory, he discoursed concerning the true way of attaining contentment and happiness; and the wisdom and eloquence of his discourses were so highly admired, that it became a common practice among the more studious of his hearers to commit them to writing.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ *Simplic.* ib. p. 70. *Orig. adv. Cels.* l. vii. p. 378. *Arrian.* l. i. c. 8.

⁷⁸ *Simplic.* p. 70. 180. *Aul. Gell.* l. i. c. 2. *Arrian.* l. i. c. 8, 9. 12. l. iii. c. 15. 23. *Orig.* l. vi. p. 283.

⁷⁹ *A. Gell.* l. xv. c. 11. l. xvii. c. 19. *Suet.* in *Domit.* c. 10. *Lucian.* in *Peregr.* t. iv. p. 283. *Arrian.* *Præf. et Diss.*

It is uncertain whether Epictetus returned to Rome after the death of Domitian; but the respect which Adrian entertained for him renders it probable. The "Conference between Adrian and Epictetus," if the work were authentic, would confirm this probability; but it is impossible to compare it with his genuine remains, without pronouncing it spurious.⁸⁰

Epictetus flourished from the time of Nero to the latter end of the reign of Adrian; but it is improbable, notwithstanding the assertion of Themistius⁸¹ and Suidas,⁸² that his life was protracted to the reign of the Antonines: for Aulus Gellius,⁸³ who wrote in their time, speaks of Epictetus as lately dead; and the emperor Marcus Aurelius mentions him only to lament his loss: whereas, had he been living when that prince engaged preceptors of different sects, it is not likely that he would have overlooked the first ornament of the Porch, or preferred his disciple Junius Rusticus. The memory of Epictetus was so highly respected, that, according to Lucian, the earthen lamp by which he used to study was sold for three thousand drachmas.⁸⁴ Epictetus himself wrote nothing. His beautiful Moral Manual, or *Enchiridion*, and his "Dissertations" collected by Arrian,⁸⁵ were drawn up from notes which his disciples took from his lips. Simplicius has left a Commentary upon his doctrine, in the Eclectic manner. There are also various fragments of the wisdom of Epictetus preserved by Antoninus, Gellius, Stobæus, and others.

Although the doctrine of Epictetus is less extravagant than that of any other Stoic, his writings every where breathe the true spirit of Stoicism. The sum of his moral precepts is *ἀντέχου καὶ ἀπέχου*, Endure and abstain.⁸⁶ He inculcates contentment upon the principle, that all things happen according to the appointment of Providence, that is, as the Stoics understood the term, according to the inevitable order of fate.

⁸⁰ Spartian. in Hadr. c. 16. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. i. p. 502. v. xiii. p. 657.

⁸¹ Orat. 5.

⁸² In Epict.

⁸³ L. ii. c. 18. l. vii. § 19.

⁸⁴ Adv. Indoct. lib. eminent. t. ii. p. 767.

⁸⁵ Phot. Cod. 58. Lucian Pseudom. t. i. p. 624. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. iii. p. 269. 246.

⁸⁶ Gell. l. xvii. c. 19.

Sextus, of Chæroneæ,⁸⁷ in Boeotia, must be added to the list of Stoics of this period. His eminence in philosophy may be inferred from the account which Antoninus⁸⁸ gives of the able and faithful manner in which he discharged the duties of a preceptor. Such was the respect which his illustrious pupil continued to entertain for him, that after he was nominated to the succession in the imperial power, he frequently visited Sextus, to converse with him upon philosophical subjects; and after he assumed the purple, often consulted him in the administration of justice. Certain "Dissertations against Scepticism," which are commonly annexed to the works of Sextus Empiricus, probably written by this Sextus of Chæroneæ.⁸⁹

The last ornament of the Stoic school, who remains to be mentioned, is the great and good emperor, *Marcus Aurelius Antoninus*;⁹⁰ a man, not less distinguished by his learning, wisdom, and virtue, than by his imperial dignity. We shall here consider him only in the light of a philosopher, and a patron of philosophers.

Aurelius, who was born in the year 121, after having been early instructed in languages, eloquence, and liberal arts, followed the natural bias of his genius, in devoting himself to the study of philosophy under Sextus Junius, and other professors of the Stoic school. At the same time he omitted no opportunity of acquainting himself with the tenets of other sects. At twelve years of age, he forsook the common pursuits and amusements of childhood, and assumed the habit of a Stoic philosopher. In order to inure himself to the hardness of the Stoic character he used to sleep upon the ground, with no other covering than his cloak; and it was with great difficulty that his mother prevailed upon him to make use of a leathern couch. So great was the respect which he always retained for his preceptors, that he honoured their memory with statues, and kept their busts, or portraits, in his domestic temple.⁹¹

The accomplishments and virtues of this excellent youth

⁸⁷ Suidas. Apul. Metam. c. 1. Eutrop. l. viii. Dio, l. lxxi. Themist. Orat. ii.

⁸⁸ De Seipso, l. i. § 9. Capitolin. in Marc. c. 3.

⁸⁹ Fabr. Bib. Gr. vol. xii. p. 617.

⁹⁰ Xiphilin. Herodian. Victor. Eutr. Zonar. Capitolin. Suidas.

⁹¹ Capitolin. c. 2. 4. De Seipso. l. i. § 1—17. Philostr. Vit. Soph. l. ii. c. 1. Dio. l. 69. 71. Macrob. Sat. l. v. c. 1.

recommended him to the favour of the emperor Adrian, who conducted him rapidly through the several stages of advancement, and who appointed Antoninus Pius his successor, upon the express condition, that Aurelius should be next in succession. Aurelius, far from being elated with these honours, upon his removal from his father's house to the emperor's, discovered great reluctance, and expressed strong apprehensions of the difficulties and hazards of government. After his advancement, he continued to treat his parents with the same respect, and to pay the same regard to their advice and authority as he had before always done. Nor did he suffer the engagements or avocations of his high station to divert him from the prosecution of his studies. Under the direction of Apollonius the Chalcidian, a Stoic philosopher, he studied philosophy as the foundation of policy, in order to qualify himself for the offices of government.⁹²

During the life of Antoninus Pius, this emperor was greatly assisted in the affairs of government by Aurelius, who gave him every possible proof of probity, fidelity and affection. After the death of the emperor, which happened in the year 161, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus was, with the unanimous concurrence of the senate and people, advanced to the purple; and through the whole course of his reign he exercised his power under the direction of philosophy, and by his justice and clemency obtained the general love of his subjects.⁹³

It is much to be lamented, that the mild and gentle spirit which this emperor unquestionably possessed, should, with respect to the Christians, have so far yielded to the importunity of inferior governors, and the tumultuous complaints of the people, that in several provinces, particularly in Gaul, he permitted them to be harassed by persecution. Perhaps, too, that false notion of the character and conduct of the Christians, which led him, with many others, to mistake their meritorious perseverance for culpable obstinacy, might have some share in producing those severities which were continued through his whole reign.⁹⁴ *

⁹² Capitol. c. 4, 5. Spart. in Hadr. c. 23. Dio, l. 71.

⁹³ Capitol. c. 6, 7, 8.

⁹⁴ Conf. Amm. Marcell. l. xxiv. c. 4. Plin. Ep. l. x. 97. De Scipio. l. xi. § 3.

* A Rescript, sent to Asia, prohibiting the persecution of the Christians,

An invasion from the north having been, not without great difficulty, repelled, the emperor devoted his attention to the institution of useful laws, and the correction of civil and moral disorders. He never failed to give encouragement to such as distinguished themselves by their talents or merit, and to recommend the strictest morality by his own example. Whilst he was indefatigable in his attention to public affairs, he filled up every hour of leisure with philosophical studies. He suffered no material incident to pass, without writing such reflections upon it as might serve to establish in his mind the habit of virtuous fortitude. This practice produced those *Meditations*, which are deservedly reckoned among the most valuable remains of Stoic philosophy. Modesty and humanity, the fairest fruits of wisdom, were virtues peculiarly conspicuous in the character of this amiable prince. He despised flattery, refuted magnificent titles, and would suffer no temples or altars to be erected in honour of his name. When the rebellion in Syria was suppressed, and the head of Anlus Cassius, the leader of the revolt, was brought to Rome, the emperor received it with manifest tokens of regret, and ordered it to be buried.⁹⁵

During an interval of peace, Aurelius took a journey to Athens. His route was marked with actions worthy of his character: and when he arrived at the ancient seat of the muses, he gave many welcome proofs of his love of learning and philosophy, by appointing public professors, liberally endowing the schools, conferring honours upon persons of distinguished merit, and performing other acts of imperial munificence.⁹⁶

Returning to Rome, the emperor retired to Lavinium, with the design of devoting himself to his favourite studies. But, after a short interval, an irruption of Scythians, and other northern people, obliged him to lead his forces against them. From this expedition he returned victorious; but, in his way home, he was seized at Vienna with a

has been ascribed to this emperor; but it is more probable that it was issued by his predecessor, Antoninus Pius.—See Lardner's *Heathen Test.* v. ii. p. 159.

⁹⁵ Capitol. c. 12. 23.

⁹⁶ Capitol. c. 24—26. Philostr. l. ii. c. 1. §. 12. Dio, l. 71.

mortal disease. Aurelius met his end with great firmness; expressing, in the true spirit of Stoicism, indifference to life, and contempt of death. He died in the sixtieth year of his age.⁹⁷

Through his whole life this illustrious philosopher exhibited a shining example of Stoic equanimity. His countenance remained unaltered by any emotions of joy or sorrow; he never suffered himself to be elated by victory, or depressed by defeat. The severity, which the philosophical system he espoused was adapted to cherish, was, nevertheless, happily chastised by an innate benevolence of heart; and it is deservedly represented as his highest praise, that he was able, by the united influence of his precepts and example, to make bad citizens good, and the good still better.⁹⁸

The philosophical Commentaries of Aurelius Antoninus, addressed to himself, *Προς ἑαυτον*, are Meditations, or Soliloquies, written for his own use.⁹⁹ In order to form a true judgment of their meaning and spirit, they should be read, not as detached moral maxims, or reflections, but as connected with, and founded upon, the principles of Stoicism. Through inattention to this precaution, a meaning has sometimes been annexed to the words of Aurelius, which is inconsistent with his system, and which he, probably, never conceived.

From the time of the Antonines to that of Alexander Severus, there were public schools of the Stoics in Athens and Alexandria: but their doctrine was corrupted by the prevalence of the Eclectic philosophy; and where we might expect to find disciples of Zeno, we only meet with followers of Ammonius.*

⁹⁷ Capitol. c. 28, 29. Herodian. c. 4, 5.

⁹⁸ Capit. l. c. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. iv. c. 12.

⁹⁹ Fabric. Bib. Gr. v. iv. p. 21—25.

* Vidend. Schilter Manud. Phil. Mor. ad Jurisp. c. 1. Gravina. Orig. Jur. Civ. l. i. § 44. Otto de Stoica Vet. Jur. Phil. Lips. Manud. ad Phil. Stoic. Diss. viii. xxiv. Werensels. de Met. Orat. Brucker. Diss. de Stoic. subdol. Christ. Imit. Temp. Helv. t. iii. § 2. Thomas de Exust. Mund. Stoic. Diss. x. Menag. Hist. mulier. Phil. § 75. Voss. de Sect. c. 19. Jons. Scr. H. Ph. l. i. c. 20. l. ii. c. 18. l. iii. c. 7. Cozzand. de Mag. Ant. Ph. l. iii. c. 4. Heum. Act. Ph. v. iii. p. 110. v. i. p. 743. v. iii. p. 486. Gale Præf. ad Opusc. Mythol. Stoll. Hist. Ph. Mor. § 223.

SECT. VIII.

Of the State of the Epicurean Philosophy under the Roman Emperors.

THE Epicurean sect, though degenerated from the simple manners of its founder, continued to flourish through a long course of years under the Roman emperors. This was owing in part to the freedom of manners which it permitted, and in part to the boldness with which it combated superstition; but principally to the strict union which subsisted among the members of this school, and the implicit deference, which they unanimously agreed to pay to the doctrines of their master.¹ The succession of disciples in this sect was, as Laertius attests,² uninterrupted, even when other schools began to fail. In many places the doctrine of Epicurus was publicly taught; and at Athens, the Epicurean school was endowed with a fixed stipend. There can be no doubt, therefore, that there must have been among the Epicureans eminent teachers of their system: and it may seem strange, that their names should not have been transmitted to posterity: but if the genius of this sect be considered, the difficulty will be obviated: for, such was the superstitious reverence, which the disciples of this school paid to the decisions of their master, that they neither ventured to add to his system, nor even to exercise their judgment in writing commentaries upon

280. 234. 237. Voss. de Hist. Gr. l. ii. c. 1. Senec. Vit. a Lipsio ap. Sen. Op. Vit. a Schotto. Gen. 1665. Fabr. Bib. Lat. t. iii. p. 496. De Servies Femmes des Douze Césars, p. ii. p. 294. Blount. Cens. Cel. Auth. p. 109. Malebranche de la Recherche, &c. P. i. l. ii. c. 4. Paschius de Var. Mod. Trad. Mor. c. iii. § 17. Diss. de Secta Elpistica Misc. Berol. t. v. Obs. ult. Morhoff. Polyh. Lit. t. i. l. vi. c. 2. Voss. de Hist. Gr. l. ii. c. 16. Epict. Vit. a Wolfio, Bellegardio, Boileavio, Fabr. Diss. de Eloq. Epict. in Fasciculo. Budd. de Mor. Phil. p. 103. Heins. de Phil. Stoic. Orat. p. 301. Scheffer de Phil. Ital. c. 10. Crellius de *ἡγεμονίᾳ* et *ἀδελφότητι* Epict. Lips. 1716. Vit. Anton. a Daclero et a Wollio. Gataker. Præf. ed. Lond. 1730. Koeler. Diss. de Phil. Aur. Ant. Budd. in Phil. Mor. Anton. Amoen. Lit. t. viii. p. 443.

¹ Senecæ, Ep. 33. Themist. Orat. iv. Euseb. Prep. l. xiv. c. 5.

² L. x. § 2.

it; their whole concern was, to transmit the tenets and maxims of Epicurus uncorrupted to posterity. Hence, whatever celebrity any of the preceptors of this sect might have attained during their lives, their names soon fell into oblivion. Among the learned men of this period, there were, however, some who held the memory of Epicurus in high estimation, and in many particulars adopted his doctrine, and who, therefore, may not improperly be ranked in the class of Epicureans. Of these the principal are, Pliny the Elder, Celsus, Lucian, and Diogenes Laertius.

Caius Plinius Secundus, called Pliny the Elder, to distinguish him from his nephew Caius Plinius Cæcilius, was born in the reign of Tiberius, about the year 23, and is commonly said to have been a native of Verona. In his youth, he took upon him the military character, and served in the army in the German war: but he soon turned the course of his ambition into the channel of learning, and by the indefatigable use of excellent talents acquired extensive and profound erudition. During the life of Nero, his dread of the savage spirit of that tyrant induced him to prosecute his studies in private. Towards the close of the reign of that emperor, he wrote a critical work on ambiguity of expression. Under the more favourable auspices of Vespasian, the superior abilities of Pliny had an opportunity of displaying themselves, not only in literary speculations, but in public affairs; for that emperor admitted him to his confidence, and employed him in important posts. In the midst of innumerable avocations, he prosecuted his studies with a degree of industry and perseverance scarcely to be paralleled. What his nephew related on this head must not be omitted. After enumerating his writings, he says: ³

“ You will wonder how a man of business could find time to write so much, and often upon such difficult subjects. You will be still more surprised when you are informed, that for some time he engaged in the profession of an advocate; that he died in his fifty-sixth year; and that, from the time of his quitting the bar to his death, he was busily occupied in the execution of the highest posts, and

³ L. iii. ep. 5.

in the service of his prince. But he had a quick apprehension, joined to unwearied application. In summer, he always began his studies as soon as it was night; in winter, generally, at one in the morning, but never later than two, and sometimes at midnight. He slept little, and this often without retiring to his chamber. After a short and light repast at noon, according to the custom of our ancestors, he would frequently, in summer, if he was disengaged from business, recline in the sun; some author, in the mean time, being read to him, from which he made extracts and observations. This indeed was his constant practice in reading; for he used to say, that no book was so bad, but something might be learned from it. When this was over, he commonly went into the cold bath, and as soon as he came out of it, took a slight refreshment, and then reposed himself for a short time. After which, as if it had been a new day, he resumed his studies till supper time, when a book was again read to him, upon which he made some cursory remarks. In summer, he rose from supper by day-light, and in winter, as soon as it was dark: and this was an invariable rule with him. Such was his manner of life, amidst the noise and hurry of the town. But in the country, his whole time was devoted to study. Even in the bath, while he was rubbed and wiped, either some book was read to him, or he dictated himself. When he was travelling, he attended to no other object. A secretary constantly attended him in his chariot. For the same reason he was always, at Rome, conveyed from one place to another in a chair. I remember he once reproved me for walking: 'You need not,' says he, 'lose so much time:' for he thought all time lost, which was not devoted to study. It was this intense application which enabled my uncle to write so many volumes, besides a hundred and sixty, which he left me, containing extracts and observations, written in a very small character."

Out of all the rich fruits of Pliny's industry, one work only has escaped the ravages of time, his "Natural History of the World:"⁴ a valuable treasury of ancient knowledge; concerning which, notwithstanding all its errors and extravagancies, we do not scruple, with some allowance

⁴ Fabr. Bib. Lat. t. i. p. 405. t. ii. p. 562.

for rhetorical decoration, to subscribe to the judgment of the Younger Pliny, who calls it "a comprehensive and learned work, scarcely less various than nature herself." The author, in the dedication to Vespasian, makes this modest apology for the defects of his history :

"The path which I have taken has hitherto been, in a great measure, untrodden; and holds forth to the traveller few enticements. None of our own writers have so much as attempted these subjects; and even among the Greeks no one has treated of them in their full extent. The generality of authors in their pursuits attend chiefly to amusement; and those who have the character of writing with great depth and refinement are involved in impenetrable obscurity. Such is the extent of my undertaking, that it comprehends every topic which the Greeks include under the name of *Encyclopædia*: of which, however, some are as yet utterly unknown, and others have been rendered uncertain by excessive subtlety. Other parts of my subject have been so often handled, that readers are become cloyed with them. Arduous indeed is the task to give what is old an appearance of novelty; to add weight and authority to what is new; to cast a lustre upon subjects which time has obscured; to render acceptable what is become trite and disgusting; to obtain credit to doubtful relations; and, in a word, to represent every thing according to nature, and with all its natural properties. A design like this, even though incompletely executed, will be allowed to be grand and noble." He adds afterwards, "Many defects and errors have, I doubt not, escaped me; for, besides that I partake of the common infirmities of human nature, I have written this work in the midst of engagements, at broken periods, which I have stolen from sleep."

It would be unjust to the memory of this great man, not to admit this apology in its full extent; and it would be still more unjust, to judge of the merit of his work, by comparing it with modern productions in natural history, written after the additional observations of seventeen hundred years. Some allowance ought also to be made for the carelessness and ignorance of transcribers, who have so mutilated and corrupted this work, that, in many places, the author's meaning lies almost beyond the reach of conjecture.

With respect to philosophical opinions, Pliny did not rigidly adhere to any sect, but occasionally borrowed such tenets from each, as suited his present inclination or purpose. He reprobates the Epicurean tenet of an infinity of worlds; favours the Pythagorean notion of the harmony of the spheres; speaks of the universe as God, after the manner of the Stoics; and sometimes seems to pass over into the field of the Sceptics. For the most part, however, he leans towards the doctrine of Epicurus.⁵

The insatiable desire, which this philosopher always discovered to become acquainted with the wonders of nature, at last proved fatal to him. An eruption of the volcano of Mount Vesuvius happening while Pliny lay, with the fleet under his command, at Misenum, his curiosity induced him to approach so near to the mountain, that he was suffocated by the gross and noxious vapours which it sent forth. An interesting account of the particulars of this tragical event is given by Pliny the Younger :⁶ it happened in the year 79.

Celsus, the adversary of Christianity to whom Origen replies, though in his attack he sometimes makes use of Platonic and Stoic weapons, is expressly ranked by Lucian,⁷ as well as Origen,⁸ among the followers of Epicurus: and this supposition best accounts for the violence with which he opposed the Christian religion; for an Epicurean would of course reject, without examination, all pretensions to Divine communications or powers. The extracts from his writings, preserved by Origen, at the same time that they prove him to have been an inveterate enemy to Christianity, shew that he was not destitute of learning and ability. *Celsus*, besides his book against the Christians, wrote a piece entitled, "Precepts of Living Well," and another "Against Magic;" but no part of his writings are extant, except the quotations made by Origen. Lucian dedicates to him his account of Alexander the impostor. That Lucian's friend was the same *Celsus*, against whom Origen wrote, appears from this circumstance, that both Lucian and Origen ascribe to him the work against Magic. *Celsus* was born towards the close of Adrian's reign, and

⁵ Hist. Nat. l. ii. c. 1. 3. 5. 7.

⁶ L. vi. ep. 16.

⁷ Luc. de Alexandro.

⁸ Origen cont. Celsum, l. i. p. 8.

was contemporary with Lucian under Aurelius Antoninus.⁹

Lucian,¹⁰ the celebrated satirist, was a native of Samosata, on the borders of the Euphrates, and flourished in the time of the Antonines and Commodus. In his youth, his father, who was of low rank, was desirous to have diverted his attention from letters, and put him under the care of his uncle, who was a statuary; but, being unfortunate in his first attempts, he deserted his art, and fled to Antioch, where he engaged, not without success, in the profession of a pleader. He soon, however, grew tired of this employment, and gave himself up entirely to the practice of eloquence, in the character of a Sophist, or rhetorician. In this capacity, he travelled through several countries, particularly Spain, Gaul, and Greece. At length, he passed over to the study of philosophy. Without rigorously addicting himself to any sect, he gathered up from each whatever he found useful, and ridiculed, with an easy vein of humour and pleasantry, whatever he thought trifling or absurd. Like Maximus Tyrius, Themistius, and several other eminent men of this age, he united the arts of eloquence, and the graces of fine writing, with the precepts of philosophy.¹¹

Photius,¹² and several modern writers, have ranked Lucian among the Sceptics; they might more properly have given him a place among the Socratics. But, in truth, there is no sect which he seems to have been so much inclined to favour as the Epicurean. He speaks of Epicurus as the only philosopher, who had been acquainted with the nature of things, and of his followers as, in the midst of mad men, alone retaining a sound mind. Himself a sworn enemy to imposture, he preferred the sect which professed to annihilate superstition: and he dedicated his narrative of the impostures of Alexander to Celsus, an Epicurean.¹³

Whatever credit be allowed to Lucian as a humorous satirist, he is, however, much to be censured for having, in many instances, suffered his propensity towards ridicule to

⁹ Orig. cont. Cels. l. i. p. 52. iii. 136. iv. 204. 206. 215. v. 249. vii. 342. Fab. Bib. Gr. v. ii. p. 809. v. v. p. 219.

¹⁰ Suidas.

¹¹ In Revivisc. t. iii. p. 156. Apolog. pro Merced. cond. t. i. 385. Herod. t. iii. p. 219. Luc. Hist. t. ii. p. 379. Conyiv. t. iv. p. 366.

¹² Cod. 128.

¹³ Hermot. t. ii. p. 170. Alex. t. i. p. 549—51. 569, 570. 576. 581—84.

lead him into severe and unjust sarcasms against the whole body of philosophers, and into a credulous, or illiberal, adoption of tales injurious to the most respectable characters of antiquity. His misrepresentation of the doctrine, and his unsupported insinuations against the character, of Socrates; the contempt with which he treats Chrysippus and Aristotle, as mere triflers; and the absurd stories which he admits, without adducing any evidence of their authenticity, are violations of candour and truth, for which no apology can be made, unless it be said, that Lucian introduced them for no other purpose than to enliven his satire, without seriously believing them himself, or expecting that they should be believed by his readers.¹⁴ His ridicule of the Christians was owing to another cause—an entire misapprehension of their character, and of the nature of their religion; and is therefore wholly unworthy of notice.

Under Aurelius Antoninus, Lucian was appointed procurator of Egypt, with a liberal salary; but how long he continued there, or where he passed the latter part of his life, does not appear.¹⁵ He lived to the age of eighty, or, as some say, ninety years, and died in the reign of Commodus. His Dialogues are still extant: they are written with humour, and discover great erudition.

We must not close our account of eminent men who favoured the Epicurean sect, without mentioning *Diogenes Laertius*, a writer, to whom the world is indebted for many facts respecting the history of philosophy. His predilection for Epicureanism is shewn in the extraordinary pains he has taken to give an accurate summary of the doctrine of Epicurus, and a full detail of his life: nevertheless, he sometimes seems to favour the doctrine of Divine Providence. Whatever system he espoused, or if he was in reality addicted to none, as a collector of philosophical facts he is entitled to the praise of having cast much light upon the history of the Grecian sects. His *Memoirs of "The Lives, Opinions, and Apotheisms of celebrated Philosophers,"*¹⁶ as a repository of materials for the history of

¹⁴ *Ib.* Vit. Auctio, &c. t. iii. 105—128. Piscator.

¹⁵ *Quomodo Hist. Scrib.* t. ii. p. 343. *de Merced. Cond.* t. i. p. 382. *Tragopodr.* t. iii. p. 672. *Ocyp.* p. 722. *Hercul. Gall.* t. i. p. 811.

¹⁶ *Menag. ad Laert.*

philosophy no where else to be met with, is exceedingly valuable; but in other respects it is a defective and faulty work. The author has collected from the ancients with little judgment; patched together contradictory accounts; relied upon doubtful authorities; admitted as facts many tales which were produced in the schools of the Sophists; and been inattentive to methodical arrangement. The work appears, on the whole, to have been the production of a credulous and feeble mind, and by no means to deserve implicit credit. Of the author nothing more is known, than is to be gathered from his writings. From his surname 'Ο Λαερτιος,¹⁷ it is probable that he was a native of Laertes, a town in Cilicia. He certainly flourished before the time of Constantine; for Sopater, who lived under that emperor, compiled, as Photius attests, the sixth book of his *Excerpta* from the writings of Diogenes Laertius. His "Lives" probably appeared about the middle of the third century.*

SECT. IX.

Of the State of the Sceptic Sect under the Emperors.

AT the period of which we are now treating, the Sceptic philosophy was either overborne by the general prevalence of the dogmatic systems, or concealed under the less obnoxious form of the Academic doctrine. A few words may therefore suffice concerning the state of Scepticism, or Pyrrhonism, under the Roman emperors.

Contradictory in its first principles to the common notions of mankind, who are inclined to credit their senses; disgraced by the extravagant practices of some of its professors; opposed with violence by the whole body of Pla-

¹⁷ Phot. Cod. 161.

* Vidend Cozzand. de Magistr. Ant. Phil. l. vi. c. 2. Masson. Plin. Vit. Cagalin. de Patr. Plin. éd. Plin. Wechelinn. Palermus de Patr. Pl. Veron. 1608. Voss. de Hist. Lat. l. i. c. 29. Bloqnt. Cens. p. 128. Marville Melanges de Liter. t. iii. p. 438. Parker de Deo, Disp. i. p. 63. Reimman. Hist. Ath. c. 28. Stoll. Hist. Ph. Pag. p. 72. Horn. Hist. Ph. l. v. c. 4. Cudworth. c. iv. § 36. Jons. l. iv. p. 332. l. iii. c. 10. 12. Voas. de Sect. c. v. § 2. c. xiii. § 3. c. xiv. § 6. c. vi. § 24. c. vii. § 24. Esasm. l. xxx. ep. 5. Heuman. Act. Phil. vol. i. p. 323. 328. Laert. Ed. Wetst. Amst. 1693.

tonists and Stoics; and destitute of countenance among the great; it was no wonder that the school of Pyrrho was little frequented, and that few persons were found, who were willing to sacrifice interest, or fame, to the empty profession of the science of knowing nothing.

Pyrrhonism, however, was not at this time entirely without avowed advocates. Diogenes Laertius mentions¹⁷ a continued succession of learned Sceptics from the time of Cicero, when Oenesidemus reformed the Sceptic school at Alexandria: Zeuxippus, Zeuxis, Antiochus, Menodotus, Herodotus, Sextus, and Saturninus. Of these, as if the medical profession peculiarly disposed the mind to Scepticism, several were physicians. Besides these, other Sceptics are mentioned by the ancients. So that when Seneca asks,¹⁸ "Who is there now, who teaches the doctrine of Pyrrho?" he must be understood either to speak of the professors of public Pyrrhonism, or to represent this school as annihilated in comparison with that of the Stoics.

Only one name occurs among the Sceptics of this period, which merits particular notice—that of *Sextus Empiricus*,²⁰ a celebrated writer. According to Suidas, he was by birth an African; but Sextus himself distinguishes between his own country and Lesbia; the place of his nativity therefore remains uncertain. His surname, Empiricus, prefixed to the manuscripts of his works, and given him by Diogenes Laertius,²¹ indicates that he was a physician of that class which was distinguished by the title of Empiric: and this he himself confirms.²²

It has been strenuously maintained, that Sextus Empiricus was the same person with Sextus Chæronensis, preceptor to Aurelius Antoninus: but it appears from the list of Sceptics given by Laertius,²³ that Sextus Empiricus was the third in succession from Menodotus and Theudes, who are mentioned by Galen in a work²⁴ which he wrote in the time of Aurelian, as at that time the last of the Empirics: consequently Sextus Empiricus had not then begun to flourish, and could not have been the emperor's preceptor. It

¹⁷ L. ix. § 116.¹⁸ Qu. Nat. l. vii. c. 32.¹⁹ Laert. l. ix. § 116. Suidas.²⁰ L. c.²¹ Conf. adv. Gramma. § 161. 200. adv. Log. l. ii. § 191. 202. 327. 328.²² L. c. § 125.²³ De Hypotyposi empirica.

is probable, that Sextus Empiricus appeared towards the close of the life of Galen, who died upwards of thirty years after he wrote the work just mentioned, in the seventh year of the reign of Severus, or in the year 200.

Sextus Empiricus was entirely devoted to the Sceptic philosophy; as fully appears from his "Institutes of Pyrrhonism," the work to which we have been almost wholly indebted for the materials of our account of this sect. He also wrote, at large, in refutation of the Dogmatists, in his treatise "Against the Mathematicians." His works discover great erudition, and an extensive acquaintance with the ancient systems of philosophy; and, on this account, chiefly merit an attentive perusal.

After the age of Sextus, there were not wanting persons who followed the Sceptic method of philosophising,²⁵ either under the name of Academics or Pyrrhonists: but the sect, through the spread of the Alexandrian philosophy, and the Christian religion, by degrees disappeared, and remained for many centuries wholly unnoticed.*

CHAP. III.

OF THE ORIENTAL PHILOSOPHY.

HAVING completed the history of the Grecian philosophy, during the period of the Roman Republic and Empire, before we pass on to the consideration of the state of philosophy among the Jews, Arabians, and Christians, it will be necessary that we endeavour to trace the remains of Barbaric philosophy in the *East*.

In our history of the ancient philosophy of the East, it appeared that, from the most remote times, the Oriental philosophers endeavoured to explain the nature and origin of things by the principle of emanation from an Eternal Foun-

* Laert. l. c. Agathias, l. ii. p. 67.

* Vidend Huet. de la Foiblesse, &c. l. i. c. 14. Sext. Emp. ed. Lips. 1718. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. iii. p. 591. v. ii. p. 91. Laetant. Inst. l. iii. c. 5. Euseb. Prep. l. xiv. c. 18.

tain of Being. That through succeeding ages this doctrine remained, and was taught in schools of philosophy in the more civilized regions of Asia and Africa, is highly probable from several considerations; which we shall proceed distinctly to lay before the reader, after premising, that we do not undertake to prove, that this species of philosophy existed under any distinct name, or can be referred, with certainty, to any single author, or leader, but merely, that a certain metaphysical system, chiefly respecting the derivation of all natures, spiritual and material, by emanation from the First Fountain, was, before the commencement of the Christian era, taught in the East, whence it gradually spread through the Alexandrian, Jewish, and Christian schools.

It is well known, that at the rise of the Grecian sects, the eastern countries were frequently visited by the sages who travelled in search of wisdom. Clemens Alexandrinus, who was well acquainted with Oriental history, says,¹ that the Greeks borrowed what was most valuable in philosophy from barbarians; for philosophy was publicly taught by the Brachmans, the Odrysii, the Getæ, the Chaldeans, the inhabitants of Arabia Felix and Palestine, the Persians, and many other nations. Among the Grecian philosophers who travelled into the East was Democritus, who visited Persia after the schools of the magi had been reformed by Zoroaster, and travelled to Chaldea, and other eastern countries, for the sake of learning philosophy. From the account which Pliny gives of this expedition, some idea may be formed of the nature of that philosophy which Democritus and others found in these schools. "Democritus," says Pliny,² "undertook what might be more properly called an exile than a journey, for the purpose of learning *Magical Philosophy*; and, returning home, taught it, in his mysteries, from the writings of certain Oriental philosophers, which he illustrated." Accordingly, the philosophy which Democritus taught appears to have been of two kinds; public, or that of the Eleatic sect; and secret, in which he followed the mysteries of the Chaldean, Persian, and other eastern magi. If these sects be compared

¹ Stromat. l. i. p. 303.² Hist. Nat. l. xxx. Proem.

with the general history of the Barbaric philosophy, and particularly with that of Zoroaster and his doctrine, it will appear exceedingly probable; that the doctrine of Emanation continued to be taught (that is, that the Oriental philosophy subsisted) without interruption in the East, through the period of the Grecian sects.

The uninterrupted continuance of the Oriental philosophy may be further inferred from the sudden rise, and rapid spread, of those numerous heresies, which, under the ostentatious name of Gnosticism, overran the churches of the East.

Porphry, in his preface to a work of Plotinus against the Gnostics, says, "that there were at that time many heretics, among whom were some, who, deriving their heresy from the *Ancient Philosophy*, were followers of Adelphinus. These," adds he, "circulated many books of Alexander the Lybian, Philocomus, and Demonstratus the Lydian, and pretended to teach certain doctrines which they had received from Zoroaster, Zostrianus, Nicotheus, Allogenes, and Mesus, herein, after having been deceived themselves, imposing upon others. These heretics assert, that Plato was little able to penetrate into the depths of intelligent natures. Therefore Plotinus frequently refuted them in his public lectures, and wrote a book, which I have entitled 'A Treatise against the Gnostics,' leaving it to me to manage this business according to my own judgment. Amelius has written forty volumes against the book of Zostrianus; and I, Porphyry, have shewn by many arguments, that this book, which they ascribe to Zostrianus, is spurious, and of modern date, and has been forged by the authors of the heresy, that their doctrine might appear to be derived from Zoroaster."³

From this passage, compared with the general design of Plotinus, in his treatise against the Gnostics, it may be inferred, that, prior to the appearance of the Gnostic heresies among the Christians, a system well known by the name of the *Ancient Philosophy*, existed in the East; that this philosophy is not to be sought among the Greeks, not even in Plato himself, but is opposed to the Grecian philosophy, as more ancient, and more consonant to the

³ Conf. Vit. Plot. c. 3. Plot. Enn. ii. l. v. p. 204. Pref. Porph.

truth; that this philosophy was commonly understood to have been taught by Zoroaster; and that the Christian Gnostics forged books, under the names of eastern philosophers, from which they pretended to derive their genealogies of emanations from the First Fountain of Intelligence. Hence, too, the reason appears, why Plotinus determined to spend eleven years in the East, *to explore the philosophy taught among the Persians and Indians.*⁴

That the Gnostic heresies were of eastern origin may be further concluded from a fragment of Theodotus the Valentinian, commonly annexed to the works of Clemens Alexandrinus, and also preserved by Fabricius, entitled, “An Epitome of the Writings of Theodotus,” and *της ἀνατολικῆς καλούμενης διδασκαλίας*, *of the doctrine called the Eastern*, in the time of Valentinian.⁵ This title evidently refers the dreams of Valentinian to an Oriental source, and therefore supposes the existence of the Oriental philosophy.

Eumapius, who was himself of the Alexandrian school, relates,⁶ that Sosipater was miraculously instructed in philosophy by two strangers, who, after being much importuned, acknowledged, that they had been initiated in *the Wisdom called Chaldaic*. The story, like most of those related by this writer, has a fabulous air; but, stripped of its disguise, it seems plainly to intimate, that in the Greek school of Jamblichus, which flourished in Cappadocia, the appellation of the Chaldaic, or Eastern philosophy was well known, and that the teachers of this philosophy communicated their mystical wisdom to those who were prepared to receive it, and particularly to the disciples of the Alexandrian school.

To these authorities, in proof of the existence of the Oriental philosophy, it may be added, as a consideration of great weight, that, if all the systems of philosophy distinct from the Grecian sects, which became famous in Asia or Egypt, particularly the Egyptian, Cabbalistic, Gnostic, and Eclectic, be compared, there will be found among them a wonderful agreement with the general principles of that system which we call the Oriental philosophy; whence it

⁴ Vit. Plot.

⁵ Fabric. Bib. Gr. vol. v. p. 135. Fragm. ed. Ulm, 1704,

⁶ In *Ædesio*, p. 61.

seems perfectly reasonable to admit the existence of this philosophy as a common source, and to make use of it as a universal key to unlock the mysteries of the rest.

Upon these grounds we conclude, that the Oriental philosophy, as a peculiar system of doctrines concerning the Divine Nature, originated in Chaldea, or Persia; whence it passed through Syria, Asia Minor, and Egypt, and, mixing with other systems, formed many different sects. There seems also to be sufficient ground for referring the formation of the leading doctrines of this philosophy into a regular system to Zoroaster,⁷ whose name the followers of this doctrine prefixed to some of their spurious books, and whose system is fundamentally the same with that afterwards adopted by the Asiatic and Egyptian philosophers.

Among the branches from the Zoroastrian stock we must reckon the Gnostic heresies, which arose so early in the Christian church.⁸ This is the only source to which they can be satisfactorily traced back; for they differ materially from the Platonic doctrine, from which they have been supposed to be derived, as Plotinus has fully shewn in his treatise against the Gnostics. The mixture of Platonic notions which we find in the Asiatic philosophy, as well as of Oriental doctrines among the later Platonists, may be easily accounted for, from the intercourse which subsisted between the Alexandrian and Asiatic philosophers, after the schools of Alexandria were established. From that time, many Asiatics who were addicted to the study of philosophy, doubtless visited Alexandria,⁹ and became acquainted with the celebrated doctrines of Plato; and, by blending these with their own, formed an heterogeneous mass of opinions, which in its turn mixed with the systems of the Alexandrian schools.¹⁰ This union of Oriental and Grecian philosophy was further promoted by the dispersion of the philosophers of Alexandria, in the reign of Ptolemy Physcon; many of whom, to escape from tyranny, fled into Asia, and opened schools in various places.

⁷ Porphyry. Vit. Plot. c. 13. 16. p. 118. ed Fabr.

⁸ Iren. l. iii. c. 4. 11. Hieron. Lat. Script. c. 21. Epiph. Hæres. 27.

⁹ 1. Ph. Castr. Hæres. 33. p. 71. ed Fabr.

¹⁰ Ammian. Marc. l. xxi. c. ult.

¹⁰ Jambl. de Myst. Egypt. Sect. viii. c. 2, 3. Marin. in Vit. Procl. c. 26.

It was, probably, at the time when the Platonic philosophers of Alexandria visited the Eastern schools, that certain professors of the Oriental philosophy, prior to the existence of the Christian heresies, borrowed from the Greeks the name of Gnostics, to express their pretensions to a more perfect knowledge of the Divine Nature than others possessed. That these philosophers assumed this vaunting appellation before their tenets were transferred to the Christians, may be concluded from this circumstance—that we find it, among the Christians, not appropriated as a distinct title to any single sect, but made use of as a general denomination of those sects, which, after the example of the Pagan philosophers, professed to have arrived at the perfect knowledge of God. The Pagan origin of this appellation seems also plainly intimated in two passages in St. Paul's Epistles; in one of which he cautions Timothy against *ἀντιθέσεις τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως*, “the opposition of false science;”¹¹ and in the other,¹² warns the Colossians not to be imposed upon by a vain and deceitful philosophy, framed according to human tradition, and the principles of the world, and not according to the doctrine of Christ.

But, whatever may be thought concerning the name, after what has been advanced, there can be little room left to doubt, that the tenets, at least, of the Gnostics, existed in the Eastern schools, long before the rise of the Gnostic sects in the Christian church under Basilides, Valentine, and others. The Oriental doctrine of Emanation seems frequently alluded to in the New Testament,¹³ in terms which cannot so properly be applied to any other dogmas of the Jewish sects. And it appears, from the authorities to which the Gnostic heretics appeal, that this doctrine was taught in the apostolic age. These heresies seem to have arisen in Egypt, and to have passed thence into Syria, and into Asia Minor, where they infected the church so early as the reign of Nero.¹⁴

It is much to be regretted that the Greek writers, to

¹¹ 1 Tim. vi. 20.

¹² Coloss. ii. 8.

¹³ 1 Tim i. 4—7. iv. 7. Tit. i. 14. iii. 9. Conf. Acts, viii. 9, 10.

¹⁴ Vitringa Obs. Sac. l. v. p. 153. 161. Conf. Tertull. de Prescr. adv. Hæc. s. 7. Epiphani. Hæres. 24. § 6, Jamb. Myst. Egypt. S. viii. c. 1.

whom we are chiefly indebted for our knowledge of the ancient history of philosophy, took so little pains to inform posterity concerning the opinions which, during the time when the Greek sects flourished, were taught in other countries, particularly in Egypt and Asia. In this want of original documents concerning the Oriental philosophy, we can form an idea of its peculiar tenets only by comparing the ancient doctrine of the East with that of those sects which sprang from this stock.

The Gnostics were chiefly employed in supporting the system of Divine Emanation, taught by Zoroaster and his followers.¹⁵ They maintained, that all natures, both intelligible, intellectual, and material, are derived, by a succession of emanations, from the infinite fountain of Deity. From this secret and inexhaustible abyss, they conceived Substantial Powers, or Natures, of various orders, to flow; till, at the remote extremity of the emanation, evil demons, and matter, with all the natural and moral evils necessarily belonging to it, were produced. This notion was pursued in the Alexandrian philosophy, in the Jewish Cabbala, and in the Gnostic system, through a long course of fanciful conceptions. The Gnostics conceived the emanations from Deity to be divided into two classes; the one comprehending all those Substantial Powers which are contained within the Divine Essence, and which complete the infinite plenitude of the Divine Nature: the other, existing externally with respect to the Divine Essence, and including all finite and imperfect natures. Within the Divine Essence, they, with wonderful ingenuity, imagined a long series of emanative principles, to which they ascribed a real and substantial existence, connected with the First Substance as a branch with its root, or a solar ray with the sun. When they began to unfold the mysteries of this system in the Greek language, these Substantial Powers, which they conceived to be comprehended within the πλήρωμα, Divine Plenitude, they called αἰῶνες, Æons; and they discoursed about them with as much confidence and familiarity, as if they had been objects of sight. The notion which they entertained of these Æons, like the Platonic notion of

¹⁵ Theopdot. ap. Fab. l. c. Plotin. contr. Gnost. et Ennead. 2. l. ix. c. 6,

Ideas, was that of *οὐσιὰς ἀντὶς καθ' ἀντὶς*, beings which existed distinctly and substantially. They included within this series the Demiurgus, or Maker of the World, whom they supposed to have been an Æon, so far removed from the First Source of Being as to be allied to matter, and capable of acting upon it. Having conceived both the spiritual and material world to have flowed from the same fountain, their system required substantial virtues, or powers, of two kinds—active and passive: hence, in their figurative and emblematical language, they speak of male and female Æons.¹⁶

If the reader should think this account of the Gnostic doctrine of Emanation obscure, we request him to lay the blame upon the mystical genius of the fabricators of this fanciful edifice. In the midst of thick darkness, it is scarcely possible that the traveller should not sometimes stumble.*

¹⁶ Plotin. contr. Gnost.

* Vidend. Moshem. Diss. de Causa. supposit. lib. Brucker. Hist. de Idæis Sect. i. § 6. Thomas Orig. Hist. Phil. et Eccl. § 26. Beausobre Hist. des Manich. t. ii. l. v. c. 2. Basnage Hist. des Juifs, l. iii. c. 28. § 13. Moshem. Hist. Christ. Sect. i. p. ii. c. 1. Burnet Arch. l. i. c. 4—8. Moshem. in Hist. Christ. ante Car. M. § 31. Walohius in Hist. Hæres. P. i. p. 235. Ernest. Bibl. nov. Theol. p. 430. Vitranga Obs. Sac. l. v. p. 146. Michaelis Intr. N. T. § 125.

BOOK IV.

OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE JEWS.

CHAP. I.

OF THE JEWISH PHILOSOPHY, FROM THE TIME OF THE
RETURN FROM THE BABYLONISH CAPTIVITY, TO THE
DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

THE state of learning and science among the ancient Hebrews, in the early period of their history, while they resided in their own country, has been already described. From the time of the Babylonish captivity, the Israelites no longer existed as an entire nation. Upon the return of the two tribes of Judah and Ephraim to Palestine, the other ten tribes being almost entirely dispersed, this remnant of the Hebrews lost their ancient name, and were called Jews.¹ Passing over the subsequent history of the dispersed tribes, as too uncertain to afford any interesting particulars concerning the state of philosophy among them, we shall inquire into the philosophical history of the Jews in Palestine from the time of their return from captivity.

In this part of our work we must extend the meaning of the term philosophy; for, in the strict sense of the word, we find few traces of philosophy in the history of the Jews. There were not wanting, indeed, among this people, men of ability and learning; but their general taste and manners, and particularly their traditionary method of instruction, were so unfavourable to scientific researches, that few philosophers, properly so called, arose in Palestine. Nevertheless, in order to prepare the way for an accurate account of the state of philosophy among the Saracens and Christ-

¹ Vid. Basnage Hist. Jud. l. vii. c. 4. Budd. Hist. Eccl. V, T, t. ii. p. 523.

ians, it is necessary that we briefly mark the progress of learning and knowledge among the Jews.

After the revival of the sacred commonwealth of the Jews, though the spirit of prophecy ceased in the person of Malachi, wise men were raised up by Divine Providence to restore their national worship, to explain to them the Divine law, and to conduct their affairs, both civil and religious. Among these, were Esdras, Zorobabel, Nehemiah, and Salthiel. Esdras, as a scribe well instructed in the law of Moses, certainly takes the first place among the learned Jews of this period, but he cannot with propriety be ranked among philosophers; nor is there any sufficient ground for considering him as the author of the Cabbalistic doctrine.²

The changes which took place in the Jewish nation, after the Babylonish captivity, produced material alterations in their philosophical and religious tenets. Two events in the Jewish history must be particularly noticed, on account of the great influence which they had upon the state of opinions; the one, the separation of the Samaritans from the Jews, which began in the time of Esdras; the other, the settling of a colony of Jews in Egypt under Alexander the Great, which was afterwards so increased by their successors, that the Jews in Egypt were little inferior, either in number or consequence, to those in Judea.

About two hundred years before the time of Esdras, when Salmanassar, king of the Assyrians, had carried the ten tribes of Israel captive into Assyria, he repeopled Samaria with a colony from Babylon, Chuta, and several other places. The country being soon afterwards harassed with wild beasts, the new settlers concluded that this calamity had befallen them, because they did not worship the god of the land, and sent a complaint to this purpose to the king of Assyria. Upon this, the king sent them one of the priests who had been taken from the country, "to teach them how they should fear the Lord." Thus

¹ D. Knibbe Hist. Proph. l. ii. c. 6. Budd: Hist. Eccl. V. T. t. ii. p. 942. Esdras, vii. 6, &c. Basnage. l. iii. c. 5. § 4, 2. l. vii. c. 2. § 7. Buxtorf. Tiberiad. c. 10. Budd. H. E. t. ii. p. 1019.

² 2 Kings, xvii. 24. Joseph. Ant. l. ix. c. ult. Beniam. Tudelens. Itin. p. 37. Basnago, l. ii. c. 4. p. 84.

the worship of the true God of Israel was restored in Samaria. At the same time, however, the idolaters retained their respective superstitions, and, "whilst they feared the Lord, served other gods." Hence the Jews, when they returned to Judea from that captivity by which they had been punished for their former propensity towards idolatry, entertained a rooted aversion against the inhabitants of Samaria, and would not allow them any concern in executing the national design of rebuilding the temple at Jerusalem. The mutual jealousies which arose from this cause were carried to the most violent extremity. Esdras and Zerobabel solemnly denounced an anathema upon the Samaritans: and the Samaritans, in their turn, made use of all their interest with the king of Assyria to obstruct the rebuilding of the temple.⁴

At the extinction of the Persian monarchy, in consequence of Alexander's conquests, the Samaritans endeavoured to accomplish a union, both civil and ecclesiastical, with the Jews. For this purpose, Sanballat, the governor of Samaria, who was of Babylonish extraction, brought about a marriage between his daughter and Menasses, the brother of Jaddus, the Jewish high priest; fully expecting that Menasses would succeed his brother in the priesthood, and that by this means a coalition would be accomplished. The event, however, did not correspond to his wishes. The Jews highly resented this profane alliance, excluded Menasses from the succession, and banished him from the city. Sanballat, on the other hand, took his son-in-law under his protection; obtained permission from Alexander to build a temple upon Mount Garizim similar to that at Jerusalem, and appointed Menasses its high priest. With Menasses a powerful body passed over from the Jews to the Samaritans; and much pains was taken to bring back their doctrine and worship to the pure standard of the law of Moses.⁵ But all this was insufficient to subdue the enmity of the Jews, who execrated the Samaritans as heretical and profane, and maintained, that they themselves alone possessed the true religion. Frequent hostilities

⁴ Eisenmenger. *Jud. Detect.* p. i. c. 2. Walton. *Appar. Bibl. Proleg.* xi. § 4. Basnage, l. ii. c. 6. § 1.

⁵ Joseph. *Ant. Jud.* l. xi. c. 4—8. l. xii. c. 1. Basnage, l. ii. c. 6. p. 113.

arose between the two countries; and Hyrcanus at last besieged Samaria, and after a long resistance took the city, and razed it, together with its temple, to the ground. The metropolis of Samaria was afterwards rebuilt by the Roman governor, Gibinius, and enlarged and adorned by Herod, who, in honour of Augustus, called the city Sebaste.⁶

It may be concluded from this narrative, that whatever difference at this time subsisted between the Jews and Samaritans, it was only such as might easily have been compromised; else Sanballat would not have thought of attempting to unite the religious institutions of both nations by making his son-in-law their common high priest. But this necessarily supposes, that the Samaritans had renounced their ancient idolatry, and were now worshippers of the true God, in forms not very different from those appointed by the Mosaic law. Some remains of erroneous opinions concerning the Divine nature, and of Pagan superstition, might, it is true, still be retained, sufficient to give occasion to the censure of Jesus, "Ye know not what ye worship." But there can be no doubt that the Jewish writers, from whom we receive most of our information concerning the Samaritans, through their aversion to this nation, have been guilty of much exaggeration and misrepresentation in their account of the Samaritan doctrine and worship. Of this kind, probably, is the tale of their having the idols of four heathen nations concealed under Mount Garizim, and the notion that they denied the existence of angels.⁷ It is not unlikely, however, that they might so far depart from the idea of angels given in the books of Moses (the only sacred scriptures they acknowledged) as to conceive them to be substantial virtues, or powers derived by emanation⁸ from

* Joseph. Ant. l. xi. c. 8. l. xii. c. 1. l. xiii. c. 18. Reland. Palest. l. ii. p. 979. Basnage, l. c. p. 99.

⁷ Epiphanius. Hærec. ix. t. 1. op. p. 25. Her. xiii. p. 30. Her. xiv. p. 31. Reland. Diss. Misc. p. ii. p. 57.

⁸ Selden is of opinion, * that the Cuthæi, by whom Samaria was in part colonised, were Persians, who dwelt on the borders of the river Cuth, and conjectures, that Nergal, the idol which they worshipped, was the sacred fire of the Persians. If this be admitted, we may reasonably conjecture, that the religion of the Persian magi, the worship of fire, brought by this

* De Diis Syriis, Synt. ii. c. 8. p. 312.

the Divine nature, according to the Oriental philosophy.⁹ This may be inferred from the history of Simon Magus, Dositheus, and Menander, whose doctrines appear to have obtained much credit and authority among the Samaritans.

Simon Magus,¹⁰ who is commonly understood to have been the person mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, was by birth a Samaritan, and in his native country practised magical arts, which procured him many followers. According to the usual practice of the Asiatics at this time, he visited Egypt, and there, probably, became acquainted with the sublime mysteries taught in the Alexandrian school, and learned those theurgic, or magical operations, by means of which it was believed that men might be delivered from the power of evil demons. Upon his return into his own country, the author of the "Clementine Recognitions"¹¹ relates, that he imposed upon his countrymen by high pretensions to supernatural powers. And St. Luke attests, that this artful fanatic, using sorcery, had bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that he was *Some Great One*; and that he obtained such general attention and reverence in Samaria, that the people all gave heed to him from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the Great Power of God."¹² *

people into Samaria, was united with the worship of the God of Israel; that with this worship was introduced the Oriental doctrine of Divine emanations, taught by the Persian Zoroaster; and that, in this manner, the Gnostic fictions concerning Divine virtues and powers spread among the Samaritans.

⁹ Reland. l. c. p. 29. Cellar. Gent. Sam. Diss. Ac. p. 109.

¹⁰ Just. Mart. Apol. ii. p. 69. 91. Iren. Hær. l. i. c. 23. § 4.

¹¹ L. ii. c. 21.

¹² Acts viii. 9. Iren. adv. Hær. l. i. c. 23. § 4. p. 100. Theodoret. Hæret. Fab. l. i. c. 1. Aug. de Hær. c. 1. Epiph. Hær. 21—24. Euseb. H. E. l. iii. c. 26.

* It has been said, that Simon Magus was worshipped by the Romans as a god; and a passage in Justin Martyr,† where he says that, between two bridges on the Tiber, he saw a statue with this inscription, *SIMONI SANCTO DEO*, has been quoted in support of this assertion. But, besides the great improbability that the Romans would rank a Samaritan among their divinities, it has since appeared that Justin Martyr read this inscrip-

† Apol. ii. p. 69. 91.

From the nature of the philosophy which, at this period, was taught, both in Asia and Egypt, and in which Simon had, doubtless, been instructed, it may be reasonably concluded that he pretended to be an *Æon* of the first order, or one of the most exalted of those substantial powers, or Divine immortal natures, which were supposed to have emanated from the eternal fountain of the Supreme Deity. He boasted, that he was sent down from heaven among men, to chastise and subdue those evil demons, by whose malignant influence the disorders and miseries of human nature were produced, and to conduct them to the highest felicity. To his wife Helena he also ascribed a similar kind of Divine nature, pretending that a female *Æon* inhabited the body of this woman, to whom he gave the name of *Εσσοια*, Wisdom; whence some Christian fathers have said, that he called her the Holy Spirit.¹³

The sum of his fanatical doctrine, divested of allegory, was, that from the Divine Being, as a fountain of light, emanate various orders of *Æons*, or eternal natures, subsisting within the plenitude of the Divine essence; that beyond these, in the order of emanation, are different classes of intelligences, among the lowest of which are human souls; that matter is the most remote production of the emanative power, which on account of its infinite distance from the Fountain of Light, possesses sluggish and malignant qualities, which oppose the Divine operations, and are the cause of evil; that it is the great design of philosophy to deliver the soul from its imprisonment in matter, and restore it to that Divine light from which it was derived; and that for this purpose God had sent one of the first *Æons* among men. He also taught, that human souls migrate into other bodies, as a punishment for their sins; and he denied the resurrection of the body.¹⁴

tion inaccurately; † for, in the year 1574, a statue was dug up in Rome, in the very situation mentioned by Justin, with this inscription, *SEMONI SANCO DEO FIDIO*.

¹³ Recog. Clem. l. ii. c. 22, &c. Hom. xix. § 14. Clem. Alex. Strom. l. ii. p. 383. August. de Hæres. c. 1. Tertull. de Anim. c. 34

¹⁴ Recog. Clem. l. ii. c. 21. p. 522. l. iii. p. 528. Epiph. Hæc. p. 58, 59.

† Ant. Van Dale ad calc. lib. de Orac. Deyling. Obs. Sac. l. i. Ob. 36.

Simon Magus, having taught these and other similar doctrines of the Oriental philosophy, may perhaps be considered as the founder of a philosophical sect of Gnostics; but it is a mistake to suppose, as many writers, implicitly following Irenæus,¹⁵ have done, that he was the head of the Christian Gnostics; for, whereas these heretics thought Christ to be one of the Æons sent down in a human form to deliver the world from the dominion of evil demons, Simon Magus claimed this very character to himself; and consequently, notwithstanding his temporary assumption of the Christian name, must be ranked among the enemies of Christ.

Dositheus was one of those fanatics who arose from the rigorous discipline of that Jewish sect, which, as we shall afterwards see, was devoted to solitude and abstinence. Failing in his attempt to pass among the Jews for their Messiah, he went over to the Samaritans, and endeavoured to persuade them that he was the prophet predicted by Moses, and practised among them various kinds of austerities. The author of the "*Clementine Recognitions*" speaks of *Dositheus* as a disciple of Simon; others make him his preceptor; but both without proof.¹⁶

Menander, a Samaritan, trod in the footsteps of Simon Magus, boasting himself to be a Great Power of God, sent to deliver the world, by magical operations, from the tyranny of evil spirits. To those who partook of his baptism he promised, that their bodies should be purified from the dregs of materiality, and be raised to a spiritual and immortal existence within the *Pleroma*, or Plenitude, of the Divine nature.¹⁷

From this time the affairs of the Samaritans declined, and their history affords nothing which requires our attention.

The *Second great Event*, in this period of the Jewish history, which affects the state of philosophy, is the settling

Iren. l. i. c. 23. 28. Clem. Hom. iii. p. 648. xviii. p. 744. xix. p. 964.
Plotin. Enn. vi. l. ix. c. 9. ¹⁵ L. c.

¹⁶ Epiph. Hær. xiii. p. 30.

¹⁷ Iren. Hær. l. ii. c. 31. Theodor. Hæret. Fab. l. i. c. 2. Euseb. Hist. Ec. l. iii. c. 26. Epiph. Hær. xxii. Tertull. de Resur. c. 5. 19. de An. c. 50.

of a Jewish colony in Egypt. Notwithstanding the hereditary hatred which, from the most ancient times, had subsisted between the Hebrews and the Egyptians, necessity had obliged the two nations, as we learn from the Sacred History, to unite more than once against the assaults of the kings of Assyria. In process of time, the enmity between them was so far subdued, that the posterity of Israel migrated to the country from which their ancestors had been expelled.

The first certain record of the settling of a Jewish colony in Egypt is that of the prophet Jeremiah,¹⁸ from whom we learn, that during the Babylonish captivity (about five hundred and eighty years before Christ,) after Ishmael had treacherously cut off Gedaliah, the governor of Judea, appointed by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Assyria, the Jews who still remained in Judea, fearing the resentment of the king, first took up their abode near the borders of Egypt, and then, contrary to the remonstrance of the prophet Jeremiah, removed into Egypt, and settled at Tahpanhes. According to the prediction of the prophet, in a successful attack soon afterwards made upon Amasis, king of Egypt, by Nebuchadonozor, they were carried captive, with a body of Egyptians, into Babylon. A few of their number, however, who had escaped into solitary places, remained in Egypt, and their posterity greatly increased.

When Alexander, in order to people his new city, Alexandria, invited strangers from different countries, among the rest a considerable body of Jews left their native country, and put themselves under the protection of the conqueror, who granted them the same privileges which he had conferred upon his own countrymen.¹⁹ This Jewish colony was afterwards enlarged by Ptolemy Lagus, who invaded Syria and Judea, besieged and took Jerusalem, and carried an hundred thousand Jews and Samaritans in captivity to Egypt.²⁰ Under the protection of Alexander and his successors, this numerous body of Jews long continued to flourish, and occasionally to receive new accessions from Judea. Ptolemy Philadelphus treated them with great liberality, and put them on the footing of equality

¹⁸ Ch. xlii. ver. 16. xliii. 10. xliv. 11.

¹⁹ Joseph. Ant. Jud. l. xi. c. 8.

²⁰ Id. l. xij. c. 1.

with the rest of his subjects; allowing them the free exercise of their religion, according to the precepts of their law, and the traditions of their fathers.²¹

It was at this time that the Alexandrian Jews, who now commonly spoke the Greek language, wrote their celebrated Greek Translation of their Sacred Scriptures, known by the name of the Septuagint Version. This translation has been said to have been made by order of the king, through the solicitation of Demetrius Phalereus, his librarian; ²² but it is improbable that a Peripatetic philosopher should have paid so much respect to the books of the Jews, as to request such an exertion of the royal authority; and the story is inconsistent, as we have already shewn, with well-known facts, in the life of Demetrius, Phalereus. The truth seems to be, that the translation was reluctantly undertaken by the Jews themselves, for the convenience of that numerous body, among whom Greek was now the common language; but that, when the Alexandrian Jews found that this public exposure of their sacred oracles was displeasing to their brethren in Palestine, they invented this story, to give their version the sanction of royal authority. On similar grounds, the story of another version,²³ more ancient than the Septuagint, of the Pentateuch, from which Pythagoras and Plato borrowed some of their doctrines, is to be rejected as fabulous; for the fact rests wholly upon the testimony of Aristobulus, whom there is reason, as we shall see, to suspect of having, through national vanity, invented this story, in order to transfer the credit of the Greek philosophy to the Hebrews.

From this period, there can be no doubt that the doctrine of the Jews was known to the Egyptians; and, on the other hand, that Pagan philosophy was known to the Jews. Grecian wisdom, corrupted by being mixed with the Egyptian and Oriental philosophy, assumed a new form in the Platonic school of Alexandria. This school,

²¹ Joseph. l. xii. c. 2.

²² Joseph. l. c.

²³ Conf. Van Dale, Diss. super Aristeæ. Hody Diss. contr. Aristeæ Ox. 1684. 8vo. et de Bibl. Text. 1705. fol.

²⁴ Clem. Alex. Strom. l. i. p. 305. 342. Euseb. Præp. Ev. l. xiii. c. 12. Joseph. Ant. l. xii. p. 391.

by pretending to teach a sublimer doctrine concerning God and Divine things, enticed men of different countries and religions, and among the rest the Jews, to study its mysteries, and to incorporate them with their own. The symbolical method of instruction which had been in use from the most ancient times among the Egyptians, was adopted by the Jews; and it became a common practice among them to put an allegorical interpretation upon their sacred writings. Hence, under the cloak of symbols, Pagan philosophy gradually crept into the Jewish schools; and the Platonic doctrines, mixed first with the Pythagoric, and afterwards with the Egyptian and Oriental, were blended with their ancient faith in their explanations of the law and the traditions.²⁵ The society of the Therapeutæ, of which we shall presently speak more fully, was formed after the model of the Pythagorean discipline: Aristobulus, Philo, and others, studied the Grecian philosophy, and the Cabbalists formed their mystical system upon the foundation of the tenets taught in the Alexandrian schools. The practice of clothing the precepts of the Mosaic law in a Platonic dress, and mixing Platonic notions with the doctrine of the Jewish religion, seems to have given birth to the ancient Jewish book, improperly called, *The Wisdom of Solomon*,²⁶ a work which abounds with Platonic language, and was probably written after the Cabbalistic philosophy was introduced among the Jews.

The preceding narrative of facts clearly shews in what manner the purity of Divine doctrine became corrupted among the Jews in Egypt. Enticed by the promise of new and hidden treasures of wisdom concerning God and Divine things, they admitted, under the disguise of allegory, doctrines never dreamed of by their ancient lawgivers and prophets, and adopted a mystical interpretation of the law, which converted its plain meaning into a thousand idle fancies. This corruption, which began in Egypt about the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, soon spread into Palestine,

²⁵ Euseb. Præp. Ev. l. viii. c. 9, 10.

²⁶ Among many other passages of this book, in which both the sentiments and language are borrowed from the Greek philosophy, the reader may consult c. i. 7. c. vii. 17—22. In ch. v. ver. 25. the Oriental doctrine of Emanation is clearly expressed.

and every where disseminated among the Jews a taste for metaphysical subtleties and mysteries.²⁷

Aristobulus, an Alexandrian Jew, who lived in the reign of Ptolemy Philometer, was an admirer of the Greek philosophy, and united with the study of the Mosaic law, in the mystical and allegorical method at this time introduced, some knowledge of the Aristotelian system. Eusebius speaks of him as a favourite of Ptolemy, and quotes, from a work of his inscribed to that prince, sundry verses of Orpheus, in which mention is made of Moses and Abraham. These verses are also found in the works of Justin Martyr; but with so much variation as to afford ground for suspecting their authenticity. It is not improbable that *Aristobulus* himself, who, as Clemens Alexandrinus relates,²⁸ ascribes the Grecian philosophy to a Hebrew origin, was the author of this fraud, as well as of the tales respecting the Greek versions of the Hebrew Scriptures. On these accounts, we cannot hesitate to rank *Aristobulus* among the first corruptors of Jewish wisdom.²⁹

From Egypt we shall now pass over into Judea, to inquire into the state of philosophy among its inhabitants. Soon after their return from the Babylonish captivity, they forsook the ancient simplicity of their sacred doctrine, and listened to the fictions of human fancy. This change happened, not through any intercourse which the Jews had, during their captivity, with the Chaldean magi (for it does not appear that they borrowed any tenets from these), but in consequence of the conquests of Alexander and his successors, which obliged them, contrary to their ancient habits, to mingle with foreigners. A circumstance which, left to its natural operation, would have led them imperceptibly into the adoption of foreign opinions and customs. But their conquerors hastened this change by compulsion; for we are informed that Antiochus Epiphanes commanded them to forsake their ancient religious ceremonies; and although the greater part of the nation bravely resisted this unjust and tyrannical command, there were some among

²⁷ Joseph. Proem. Ant. Jud. p. 3.

²⁸ Strom. l. i. 305.

²⁹ Maecab. l. ii. c. i. v. 10. Euseb. Præp. l. viii. c. 9. l. xiii. c. 5. Justin. Cohort. ad Gent. et Apol. ii.

them so unfaithful to their country and their God, as to shew an inclination to court the favour of the conqueror by mixing Pagan tenets and superstitions with their own sacred doctrines and ceremonies.³⁰ The influence of example in their Alexandrian brethren, who had already caught the infection of Gentilism, doubtless concurred, with the circumstances of the times, to introduce corruption into the schools of Judea. Accordingly we find, in fact, that a taste for Grecian philosophy and Egyptian mysteries so far prevailed in the joint reign of Aristobulus and Hyrcanus, that some of the zealous advocates for the purity of the Jewish faith and worship thought it necessary to denounce *anathema* upon any one who should teach the Grecian wisdom to his children.³¹ No *anathema*, however, could prevent the spread of Grecian learning among the Jews.

In the time of Alexander Jannæus, about one hundred years before Christ, Simon ben Shetach, a learned Jewish doctor, who had, for some political offence, been banished Judea, was recalled, with his disciples, from Alexandria, "and with him," as Jehudas Levi relates,³² "the Cabbala, or oral tradition, recovered its pristine vigour." And there can be little doubt that this Cabbala included the theoretical as well as preceptive doctrines received by the Alexandrian Jews under the notion of traditions; especially since we have so many proofs of the early prevalence of these doctrines among the Jews, in the writings of Philo and others.

The result of the facts already related is, that the mystical, or cabbalistic, doctrine of the Jews arose in the time of the first Ptolemies. The Jewish mystics, indeed, pretended to trace back their fanciful system even to Adam in Paradise, and boast that their oldest cabbalistic books were written by the patriarch Abraham.³³ But it will be evident to any one, who compares these books with the system compounded of Oriental, Pythagoric, and Platonic doctrines, which the Jews at this time began, as we have seen, to mix

³⁰ Maccab. Hist. Joseph. Ant. J. l. xii.

³¹ Gemar. Bab. in Menachoth. f. 64. Lightfoot Hor. Heb. Math. viii. 30.

³² Lib. Cosri, p. iii. p. 240. Conf. R. Mardochai de Karais, c. 3.

³³ R. Gedalias Shalshel. Hakkabal. p. 28.

with the Mosaic law, that the leading tenets of the Cabbala and the Alexandrian philosophy are the same. The ancient book entitled *Cosri*, written by Jehuda Levi before the compilation of the Talmud, describes, in allegorical and mystical language, the philosophy which passed over from the Alexandrian schools into Judea. The same philosophy is found in the cabbalistic books of the *Jezirah*, mentioned in the Talmud; in the *Sohar*, ascribed to Simæon ben Jochai, a disciple of Akibha, who lived in the time of Vespasian; and in the *Bakir*, said to be of still greater antiquity. Although the age of these books is not certainly known, there is great reason to conclude from their contents, that the seeds of the cabbalistic doctrine were first sown under the Ptolemies, when the Jews began to learn the Egyptian and Oriental theology, and to incorporate these foreign dogmas with their ancient creed.

Having said thus much concerning the introduction of Gentile philosophy among the Jews, both in Egypt and Palestine, the way is prepared for inquiring into the rise and progress of their *domestic sects*. After all the learned labour which has been bestowed upon this subject, the origin of these sects still remains involved in obscurity. Some eminent writers, on the authority of several passages in the history of the Maccabees, and in Josephus, have said,³⁴ that many of the Jews, after their return from captivity, expressed their religious zeal, not only by a strict observance of the law, according to its literal meaning, but by introducing certain religious ceremonies, and other services, not prescribed in the written law, as voluntary expressions of extraordinary sanctity; that a large body of these zealots formed themselves into a fraternity, or sacred college, under the name of Hasidæi, who, under the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, joined the Maccabees; that, in process of time, the institutions of this body were digested into a regular canon, which created innumerable disputes, and produced parties among the Jews, of whom those who adhered strictly to the letter of the Mosaic law were called Karæites, while the advocates

³⁴ Scaliger. Elench. Trihaeres. c. 22. Drusius et Serrarius de Hasidæis. edit. a Trigland. in Syntagm. de Trib. Sect. Jud. Delph. 1704. Goodwin's Moses and Aaron, l. i. c. 9.

for the new institutions retained the name of *Hasidæi*; and that from the former sprung the *Sadducees*, and from the latter the *Pharisees* and *Essenes*. This account of the rise of the Jewish sects is plausible, but destitute of sufficient evidence from antiquity. For the *Hasidæi*, mentioned by the author of the history of the *Maccabees*,³⁵ were not a religious sect, but a civil party, which arose during the wars. Upon this matter nothing further is certain, than that, soon after the termination of the prophetic age, the Jews began to corrupt the law of Moses, by introducing certain precepts and institutions, which they professed to have received by oral tradition from the most ancient times. This traditionary law, which chiefly respected religious ceremonies, fastings, and other practices distinct from the moral duties of life, at length obtained, with the greater part of the Jewish nation, a degree of authority equal to that of the Mosaic law; whilst the rest, rejecting these innovations, adhered strictly to the institutions of their sacred oracles. These two general classes, which do not appear to have been distinguished, on this single ground, by any peculiar appellation, gradually adopted other tenets and customs, and formed several distinct sects, of which the principal were the *Sadducees*, the *Karaites*, the *Pharisees*, and the *Essenes*.

Without paying any attention to the extravagant fiction of the Jewish writers, who pretend to refer the origin of the *Sadducean* doctrine to Pagan atheists, among whom they reckon Aristotle; who, by the way, was, they affirm, afterwards converted, and made a proselyte of righteousness, by Simeon the Just;³⁶ we shall confine ourselves to those events, in the history of the Jewish church, which seem to have gradually given existence to the sect of the *Sadducees*.

It is exceedingly probable, that, as soon as the oral, or traditionary, law abovementioned was introduced, multitudes reprobated the innovation, and determined to adhere to the written law, in its obvious and literal meaning. This dispute might naturally occasion a controversy concerning the doctrine of the Hebrew Scriptures upon the

* L. i. c. vii. 13. l. ii. c. xiv. 6.

* *Shalsheteth Hakkabalah*, p. 83.

subject of a future state; and the speculations of the Alexandrian Jews, which about this time began to be known in Judea, might furnish fresh matter of debate. These conjectures are confirmed by facts.

Antigonus Sochæus,²⁷ a native of Socho on the borders of Judea, who flourished in the time of Eleazar the high priest (or about three hundred years before Christ), and was a disciple of Simeon the Just, offended at the innovations which were introduced by the patrons of the traditionary institutions, and particularly at the pretensions which were made to meritorious works of supererogation, by means of which men hoped to entitle themselves to extraordinary temporal rewards, strenuously maintained and taught, that men ought to serve God, not like slaves for hire, but from a pure and disinterested principle of piety. This refined doctrine, which Antigonus only opposed to the expectation of a temporal recompense for works of religion and charity, his followers misinterpreted, and extended to the rewards of a future life. *Sadoc* and *Baithosus*, two of his disciples, taught, that no future recompense was to be expected, and consequently, that there would be no resurrection of the dead. This doctrine they taught to their followers; and hence arose, about two hundred years before Christ, the sect of the *Baithosæi*, or *Sadducees*. These appellations, derived from the names of the founders of the sect, seem to have been at first used promiscuously; but by degrees the former fell into disuse; which accounts for the silence of the sacred history, and of Josephus, concerning the *Baithosæi*.²⁸

The sect of the *Sadducees* long continued to flourish in Judea, and to possess great authority. Although they differed in fundamental points of faith from the rest of the nation, they were admitted to sacred privileges and offices, and even to the highest dignity of the priesthood.²⁹ And notwithstanding the enmity which subsisted between this sect and that of the Pharisees, on account of the contempt with which the *Sadducees* treated the traditionary law,

²⁷ Lightfoot, *Hor. Hebr. ad Matt. iii. 7. t. ii. p. 273.* Reland *Palæst. l. iii. p. 1018.* Basnage, *l. ii. c. 14.*

²⁸ *Pirke Abboth. c. 5.* R. Nathan, *ad l. c. apud Lightfoot. t. ii. p. 737.*

²⁹ *Acts v. 17.* Joseph. *Ant. l. xx. c. 15.*

these sects frequently united in public councils, and in defence of the common cause of religion. Under the reign of Hyrcanus, who, about one hundred and thirty years before Christ, possessed the supreme civil and sacerdotal power in Judea, the Sadducees were the leading sect; for that prince, being opposed by the Pharisees in the execution of the office of high priest, treated them with great severity, and espoused the Sadducean party, requiring the whole nation, on pain of death, to profess the doctrine of this sect. After the death of Hyrcanus, the persecution of the Pharisees was, for some time, continued by his son, Alexander Jannæus; but Alexandra, the wife of Jannæus, who succeeded him in the government, finding that the Pharisaic sect was more popular than the Sadducean, espoused the interest of the Pharisees, and restored their power and influence. The Sadducees, however, afterwards regained a considerable share of political and ecclesiastical consequence; for we find, that Caiaphas and Ananus, who were both of this sect, possessed in succession the office of high priest.⁴⁰ After the destruction of Jerusalem, the sect of the Sadducees fell into contempt among their countrymen, and even incurred the hatred of the Christians; the emperor Justinian issued a severe edict against them,⁴¹ inflicting banishment, and, in case of obstinate perseverance, even death, upon those who should teach their doctrines.

The chief heads of the Sadducean tenets were these :⁴²

All laws and traditions, not comprehended in the written law, are to be rejected as merely human inventions. Neither angels nor spirits have a distinct existence, separate from their corporeal vestment. The soul of man, therefore, does not remain after this life, but expires with the body. There will be no resurrection of the dead, nor any rewards or punishments after this life. Man is not subjected to irresistible fate, but has the framing of his condition chiefly in his own power. Polygamy ought not to be practised.

⁴⁰ Joseph. Ant. l. xiii. c. 18. 24. Megellath. Taanith, c. 4. Basnage, l. ii. c. 15.

⁴¹ Novell. 146.

⁴² Joseph. Ant. l. xiii. c. 18. l. xviii. c. 2. de Bell. Jud. l. ii. c. 12. Acts xxiii. 6. 8. Matt. xxii. 23. Mark xii. 18. Luke xx. 27.

It has been asserted,⁴³ that the Sadducees only received, as of sacred authority, the five books of Moses. But the contrary clearly appears from their controversy with the Pharisees, in which the latter appeal to the prophets, and other sacred writings, as well as the law, which they could not have done with any propriety or effect, had not the Sadducees admitted their authority. To this we may add, that had this been the case, it is very improbable that such heresy would have passed without censure.

The Sadducees are sometimes ranked with the Epicureans; but improperly: for, though they agreed with them in denying the doctrine of a future state, they differed from them essentially in their ideas of God and Providence. Whilst the Epicureans admitted no Supreme Intelligent Ruler of the World, and supposed the gods wholly unconcerned in human affairs, the Sadducees acknowledged the existence of the one true God, the Jehovah of the Jews, and admitted his universal providence, only rejecting the notion of an absolute and uncontrollable influence over the volitions and actions of men: they admitted, too, the reasonableness and obligation of religious worship. Their denial of a future state of rewards and punishments may perhaps be in part ascribed to their belief in the homogeneous nature of man; for Josephus expressly says,⁴⁴ that they took away the distinct and permanent nature of the soul: *ψυχῆς τε τὴν διαμονὴν ἀναιροῦσι*. This was, probably, the chief ground of their opposition to Christianity, whose distinguishing doctrine is that of the resurrection from the dead.

The sect of the *Karæites*,⁴⁵ though its history be exceedingly obscure, is not to be confounded with that of the Sadducees. The name *Karæite* denotes a textuary, or scripturist, and seems intended to distinguish those who followed the written law alone, from those who admitted the authority of traditionary precepts. The origin of this sect is, therefore, to be referred to the time when the traditionary, or oral, law was introduced, and with it the allegorical interpretation of the written law. It may be col-

⁴³ Tertull. de Præscript. l. i. c. 14. Orig. contr. Cels. l. i. p. 39.

⁴⁴ De Bell. J. l. ii. c. 12. Conf. Ant. J. l. xviii. c. 2. l. xx. c. 8.

⁴⁵ R. Mardochai de Karæis, Trigland. Shupart. et Wolf. de Kar.

lected from the Jewish records, that this sect existed in the time of Hyrcanus, and that the followers of Shammai were addicted to it.⁴⁶ The fact seems to have been, that the traditionary law was opposed, as a corruption of the true religion, by a numerous body, who strenuously asserted the sufficiency and perfection of the ancient written law, explained in its literal sense. Among these, as we have already seen, were the Sadducees. But it is exceedingly probable, that the Sadducean tenets were highly offensive to many pious men, who, nevertheless, were not disposed to join those who received the traditionary institutions. These adhering simply to the letter of the Mosaic law, but at the same time refusing to adopt the doctrine of the Sadducees, would of course become a separate sect, which would be distinguished by some name expressive of their leading principle. It is not improbable that the opposite party gave them, in derision, the name of Scripturists, or Karæites. In this manner we conceive that this sect arose at the same time with those of the Sadducees and Pharisees.

The continuance of the sect of the Karæites through several subsequent ages may be learned from the *Cosri* of Jehuda Levi, above quoted, which intimates, that, in the time of the Rabbies Jehuda ben Tabbai and Simeon bed Shetach, when the traditionary precepts obtained increasing authority, the followers of the letter of the law were a separate body. Perhaps the class of *νομῆναι*, lawyers, mentioned by the Evangelists as distinct from the Scribes and Pharisees,⁴⁷ were the Karæites. This conjecture is favoured by a tradition preserved in the Jerusalem Talmud,⁴⁸ that there were in Jerusalem four hundred and eighty synagogues, each of which had a separate apartment for the law, and another for the Talmud, or traditionary records; whence it seems probable, that the Scripturists were a party distinct from the Traditionaries. The scribes, whose office it was to expound the law, from the manner in which they are usually mentioned in the New Testament, in conjunction with the Pharisees, may be concluded to have adopted, in their interpretations, the alle-

⁴⁶ R. Mose. Bethshitshi ap. Trigland. de Kar. c. 6.

⁴⁷ Luc. xi. 45, 46.

⁴⁸ Megillat. f. 73.

gorical method of the Traditionaries and Cabbalists, and therefore to have commonly belonged to their party.

After the destruction of Jerusalem, the interest of the traditionary party greatly increased, and that of the Scripturists proportionally declined; so that the Karæites are from this time little heard of, except when they are mentioned by the Pharisaical Rabbies in terms of reproach, till the eighth century, when we find the sect revived by the Rabbi Anari ben David, whose heresy brought upon him a heavy load of obloquy. The history of this Rabbi clearly shews, that he was not, as some have supposed, the author, but the restorer of the Karæite sect.⁴⁹ From his time, this sect continued to produce men well skilled in the Jewish law; among whom, in the twelfth century, was Abu-Alphareus, who lived in Palestine, and wrote a commentary upon the Pentateuch, which added so much strength to the interest of the Karæites, that the traditionary party thought it necessary to implore the assistance of the civil magistrate.⁵⁰ Notwithstanding this, however, the Karæites continued to hold their assemblies; and they are, at this day, found as a distinct body in Turkey, Russia, and Lithuania, but are oppressed by the jealousy of their countrymen, to whom a Karæite is more hateful than a Christian or a Turk.⁵¹

The distinguishing tenets of the sect of the Karæites are: that there is no other rule of faith and worship than the writings of Moses and the prophets; that all oral traditions, and all allegorical and mystical interpretations of the law are to be rejected; that all material beings were created by an uncreated Deity, of whom no resemblance can be found in any thing which he has made; that he knows all things, and exercises a constant providence over all his works; that the human mind is subject to Divine influence, but at the same time remains free in its volitions; that true penitence takes away guilt; that, after death, the soul, if it be worthy, ascends to the intellectual world to live there for ever, but if it be guilty, it is consigned to a state of pain and ignominy; that God alone is to be wor-

⁴⁹ Abr. Ben Dior. Kabb. Hist. s. 66.

⁵⁰ Buddæi Hist. Ph. Heb. § 30.

⁵¹ Tenzel. Colloq. Menstr. 1691. Basnage, l. ii. c. 6.

shipped ; and that fasts are to be strictly observed.⁵² The present adherents of this sect are said to observe the moral precepts of their law more strictly than their brethren, the Pharisaic Rabbinites, with whom, nevertheless, they are thought unworthy of ecclesiastical communion.

The most celebrated of the Jewish sects was that of the *Pharisees*. Its origin, as well as that of the other sects, is involved in some obscurity. The prophet Isaiah, indeed, found among the Jews, in his time, several appearances of the spirit and character which afterwards distinguished the sect of the Pharisees.⁵³ But we have no proof that they existed as a distinct body in the prophetic age ; nor do we find any traces of this sect prior to the time when oral traditions, together with the allegorical interpretations of the written law, were introduced in the manner already explained. Although we meet with no satisfactory evidence of the existence of the sect of the *Hasidæi*, which Scaliger⁵⁴ supposes to have been the foundation of the Pharisaic sect, we think there can be little reason to doubt that this sect arose soon after the return from the Babylonish captivity, in consequence of the introduction of traditionary institutions and allegorical interpretations. That it was established, and had acquired great authority in the time of Hyrcanus, and of his sons, Aristobulus and Alexander, has been already hinted, and may be seen more at large in Josephus's account of their affairs.⁵⁵ Josephus, who was himself of this sect, speaks of it as flourishing in the time of Jonathan the high priest, together with those of the *Sadducees* and *Essenes* ; which invalidates the conjecture of Basmage,⁵⁶ that the Pharisaic sect owed its rise to the separation which took place between the schools of Hillel and Shammai ; for the Jewish writers agree, that these celebrated doctors did not flourish earlier than an hundred years before the Christian era.

⁵² R. Japhet. Lev. Conf. Wolf. Bib. Heb. p. i. p. 671. Trigland. l. i. c. 10, 11. Schudt. Memor. Jud. p. ii. l. vi. c. 27.

⁵³ Is. lviii. 2, 3. lxxv. 5.

⁵⁴ Blench. Trihaeres. c. 22. p. 170. Reland. Antiq. Sac. p. 2. c. ix. § 13.

⁵⁵ Ant. Jud. l. xiii. c. 9. 24.

⁵⁶ Hist. des Juifs, l. ii. c. 17. § 2. Conf. Wolf. Bibl. Heb. p. ii. p. 816—824. Natal. Alex. Hist. Eccl. c. i. art. 5. § 3.

Although the exact time of the first appearance of the Pharisaic sect cannot be ascertained, its origin may be easily traced back to the same period in which the Sadducean heresy arose. From the time that the notion of supernumerary acts of self-denial, devotion, and charity, was introduced under the sanction of the traditionary law, a wide door was opened for superstition, religious pride, and hypocrisy. Whilst, on the one hand, some would despise the weakness, or the affectation, of professing to be pious and holy beyond the prescription of the written law, others, through a fanatical spirit, or that they might provide themselves with a convenient cloak for their vices, would become scrupulous observers of the traditionary institutions. And when these pretenders to extraordinary sanctity saw that many of those who observed only the written law, not only disclaimed all works of supererogation, but even renounced the hope of future rewards, they would think it necessary to separate themselves into a distinct body, that they might the more successfully display their sanctity and piety. These conjectures are confirmed by the name of the sect, which is derived from the word *שִׁבְעָה*, *to separate*.⁷ Their separation consisted chiefly in certain distinctions respecting food, clothing, and religious ceremonies: it does not seem to have interrupted the uniformity of religious worship, in which the Jews of every sect appear to have always united.

The peculiar character and spirit of Pharisaism consisted in the strict observance of the oral law, which they believed to have been delivered to Moses by an archangel, during his forty days' residence on Mount Sinai, and to have been by him committed to seventy elders, who transmitted it to posterity.⁸ Their superstitious reverence for this law, and the apparent sanctity of manners which it produced, rendered them exceedingly popular. The multitude, for the most part, espoused their interest; and the great, who feared their artifice, were frequently obliged to court their favour. Hence they obtained the highest offices

⁷ Suidas in *Pharis*.

⁸ Joseph. *Ant. Jud.* l. xiii. c. 18. 23, 24. l. xvii. c. 3. De Bell. J. I. ii. c. 12. Eissenmenger *Jud. Detect.* p. i. c. 8. Hornbeck de *Jud. Cohv.* l. i. c. 3.

both in the state and the priesthood, and had great weight both in public and private affairs: in some instances they proved so troublesome to the reigning powers, as to subject themselves to severe penalties. Hyrcanus and Alexander restrained their increasing influence, and treated them with great rigour. Under Alexandra, however, they regained their consequence; the dissensions between the schools of Hillel and Shammai,⁵⁰ a little before the Christian era, increased their number and power; and they continued, till the destruction of Jerusalem, to enjoy the chief sway in the sanhedrim and in the synagogue. After that period, when the other sects were dispersed, the Pharisees retained their authority; and, though the name has been dropped, their tenets and customs have ever since prevailed among the Jewish Rabbinites; so that, at this day, except the Karaites, scarcely any Jews are to be found who are not, in reality, of the Pharisaic sect.⁶⁰

The principal dogmas of the Pharisees were these:

The oral law, delivered from God to Moses on Mount Sinai, by the angel Metraton, and transmitted to posterity by tradition, is of equal authority with the written law. By observing both these laws, a man may not only obtain justification with God, but perform meritorious works of supererogation. Fasting, alms-giving, ablutions, confessions, are sufficient atonements for sin. Thoughts and desires are not sinful, unless they are carried into action. God is the creator of heaven and earth, and governs all things, even the actions of men, by his providence. Man can do nothing without Divine influence; which does not, however, destroy the freedom of the human will. The soul of man is spiritual and immortal. In the invisible world beneath the earth, rewards and punishments will be dispensed to the virtuous and vicious. The wicked shall be confined in an eternal prison; but the good shall obtain an easy return to life. Besides the soul of man, there are other spirits, or angels, both good and bad. The resurrection of the body is to be expected.⁶¹

⁵⁰ Gieger. de Hill. et Shamm.

⁶⁰ Menass. ben Israel de Termino Vit. l. i. § 3. Schudt. Mem. Jud. p. 2. l. vi. c. 27. § 11. Wolf. Bibl. Heb. p. ii. p. 816.

⁶¹ Joseph. Ant. Jud. l. xiii. c. 9. l. xviii. c. 2. Bell. J. l. ii. c. 12.

It appears, from many passages in the writings of the Jewish rabbis, that they held the doctrine of the migration of souls from one body to another; and it is probable that they derived it from the ancient Pharisees, and these from the Oriental philosophers. This *Metempsychosis* is, however, to be understood in the Pythagoric, and not in the Stoic sense. The Jews, probably, borrowed this error from the Egyptians. There is no reason, as some writers have done, to consider the sect of the Pharisees as a branch from the Stoic school.⁶² For, though the Pharisees resembled the Stoics in their affectation of peculiar sanctity, their notion of Divine Providence was essentially different from the Stoical doctrine of Fate; and their cast of manners arose from a different source: that of the Stoics being derived from their idea of the nature of the soul, as a particle of the Divine nature; that of the Pharisees, from a false persuasion that the law might be fulfilled, and justification with God obtained, by ceremonial observances.

The peculiar manners of this sect are strongly marked in the writings of the Evangelists;⁶³ particularly, their exactness in observing the rites and ceremonies of the law, both written and traditionary; the rigour of their discipline, in watchings, fastings, and ablutions; their scrupulous care to avoid every kind of ritual impurity; their long and frequent prayers, made not only in the synagogues and temple, but in the public streets; their broad phylacteries on the borders of their garments, in which were written sentences of the law; their assiduity in making proselytes; their ostentatious charities; and, under all this shew of zeal and piety, their vanity, avarice, licentiousness, and inhumanity. This account is confirmed by the testimony of the Jewish writers themselves.⁶⁴ The Talmudic books⁶⁵ mention several distinct classes of Pharisees, under characters which shew them to have been deeply immersed

⁶² Joseph. in Vita sua, p. 999. Budd. Hist. Ph. Heb. § 19. Fab. Bib. Gr. v. ii. n. 508. Budd. Hist. Eccl. Vet. T. t. ii. p. 1217.

⁶³ Matt. vi. ix. xv. xxiii. Luke vii. &c.

⁶⁴ Lightfoot ad. loc. cit. Goodwin. Mos. et Aaron, p. 180. 202. Pirke Abboth. c. ii. n. 5. Bava Bathra, f. viii. 2. Basnage. H. J. l. ii. p. 499.

⁶⁵ Lightfoot in Math. ii. 7. Goodwin, p. 205. Buxtorf. Lex. Talm. p. 1852. Hottinger. Thesaur. Phil. l. i. c. 1.

in the idlest and most ridiculous superstitions. Among these were, the Truncated Pharisee, who, that he might appear in profound meditation, as if destitute of feet, scarcely lifted them from the ground; the Mortar Pharisee, who, that his contemplations might not be disturbed, wore a deep cap, in the shape of a mortar, which would only permit him to look upon the ground at his feet; and the Striking Pharisee, who, shutting his eyes as he walked, to avoid the sight of women, often struck his head against the wall. Such wretched expedients did some of these hypocrites make use of to captivate the admiration of the vulgar. The political influence which their popularity gave them appears in almost every part of the Jewish history; particularly in the reigns of Hyrcanus, Aristobulus, Jamæus Alexander, Alexandra, and Herod.⁶⁶ Among the followers of Pharisaism were women, who, after the example of the men, under the cloak of singular piety and sanctity, disguised the most licentious manners.⁶⁷

Another Jewish sect was that of the *Essenes*, of the origin of which the learned are much divided in opinion. It is certain, from the testimony of Josephus,⁶⁸ that it flourished in the time of Jonathan, the brother of Judas Maccabæus, that is, one hundred and sixty years before Christ. It also appears from the account which Josephus gives of the institutions of this sect, that they were borrowed from the Pythagoreans. It may therefore be conjectured, with a high degree of probability, that at the time when the great body of the Jews were carried captive into Babylon, the small remainder of this oppressed people, after their temple was demolished, their city laid waste, and their religious worship interrupted, were driven by the cruel oppression of Gedaliah, the prefect set over them by the king of Assyria, to take refuge in Egypt; that here, for want of the public rites of religion, these fugitives, who had a settled aversion to the idolatries of the Egyptians, withdrew into solitary places, where they endeavoured to supply the place of sacrifices by devoting themselves, in private, to a religious

⁶⁶ Jos. Ant. Jud. l. xiii. c. 18. 24, 25. l. xviii. c. 1, 2. Vitringa de Vet. Synag. p. 191. Reland. Ant. Heb. p. 132. Selden de Syned. p. 736.

⁶⁷ Lightfoot in Matt. iii. 5.

⁶⁸ Antiq. Jud. l. xiii. c. 9. 24.

life : and that, when they became acquainted with the Pythagoreans, who in the same country adopted a plan of life somewhat similar to their own, they borrowed from them such of their opinions and practices, as, by the help of the Egyptian method of allegorizing, they could incorporate with the doctrines and institutions of Moses. Afterwards, when new colonies of Jews were brought into Egypt by Alexander and Ptolemy Lagus, and were allowed the free exercise of their religion, it is probable that these Jewish hermits, having been long accustomed to solitude, persisted in their ascetic life and peculiar institutions, and formed a distinct society; that some of these, with others of their countrymen, embracing the indulgence granted them by Ptolemy Lagus, returned to Judea; and that here, through the power of habit, they continued their former manner of life, and, retiring to the desert parts of the country, established and propagated that peculiar sect, which, from their extraordinary sanctity, were called Essenes, a name probably derived from the word *qan*, which signifies *holy*. These conjectures, though not supported by any direct authority, perfectly agree with the subsequent history of this sect, and account for its existence more satisfactorily than any other which have been suggested.⁶⁹

The Essenes formed themselves into a friendly fraternity, for the purpose of subduing their passions, and leading a holy life. They commonly lived in a state of celibacy, and adopted the children of other men, to educate them in their own principles and customs. They despised riches, and had a perfect community of goods; every one, who was admitted into their society, lodging his whole property in a common treasury, whence the wants of all were equally supplied. They clothed themselves in plain garments, chiefly white, and held oil, and unguents of every kind, in abomination. Their daily religious exercises they performed with great exactness. Before the rising of the sun, they suffered no common language to pass their lips, but recited certain prayers, that it might

⁶⁹ Conf. Jos. Ant. l. xviii. 2. Bell. J. l. ii. c. 11. Plin. Hist. Nat. l. v. c. 17. Pliny was too little acquainted with Jewish affairs to deserve credit on this subject.

rise upon them fortunately; at the same time looking towards the sun, which they regarded as a symbol of the Deity. From this time to the fifth hour every one was employed in his proper occupation; then, washing themselves, and putting on their white garments, they went into their public hall, or refectory, to dinner, and received their portion of food from the hand of the servitor in silence. After their evening labours, they supped together in the same manner; and every meal was begun and closed with prayer. No noise or confusion was ever heard or seen in their assemblies; but conversation was carried on with such quietness, that a spectator would have imagined the silence and tranquillity of the scene intended to express some sacred mystery. They were temperate, peaceable, and honest; true to their word, without the obligation of an oath, to which they were averse, except on the most solemn occasions; and prompt to deeds of kindness, which they performed at pleasure, without the authority of the master of the fraternity, whose instructions they were in all other things obliged to follow. The virtues of plants and minerals were much studied among them, and applied to the cure of diseases. They honoured the name of Moses next to that of God; and he who blasphemed it was punished with death. So rigorous were they in the observance of the Sabbath, that they would neither kindle a fire, nor remove a vessel, nor ease themselves on that day. To be touched by any one not belonging to their sect, or for an old man of their order to be touched by a young person, they held to be an impurity which required ablution. Some among them undertook to predict future events from their sacred books. They offered no sacrifices, but on the seventh day repaired to the synagogue, where the elder brethren explained the law to the younger. Through the simplicity of their manner of living, it commonly happened, that they lived to an extreme old age. They were capable of enduring pain with great fortitude; as appeared in the firmness with which they bore the tortures inflicted upon them by the Romans, rather than blaspheme their lawgiver, or violate any of his precepts. They held, that the body is perishable, but the soul immortal; that the soul, formed of a subtle ether, is imprisoned in the body,

and is never happy till it is released from its prison; that the good will, after death, be removed to a tranquil and delightful region beyond the ocean, but the bad to a dark habitation, which resounds with never-ceasing lamentations; and that all things are under the direction of Divine Providence.⁷⁰

The body of the Essenes was not a single community, but consisted of many distinct societies, formed in the country, where they practised agriculture, or at a small distance from a town, where they might exercise their manual occupations: they had, however, one common interest: and when any one of their number happened to travel, wherever he found an Essene fraternity, he was sure of being supplied with necessary provision and clothing. All domination they held to be unjust, and inconsistent with the law of Nature, who has produced all her sons in a state of equality. So averse were they to war, that they would not suffer any of their body to be employed in manufacturing military weapons, or instruments of any kind. No one was admitted as a member of this fraternity, without passing through a course of preparatory discipline out of the society, for one year, and afterwards approving his constancy, by two years' regular attendance within the college. After this, if he was judged worthy, he was received as a brother, with a solemn oath to conform to the discipline, and observe the rules of the society, to guard its sacred books, and the names of its angels, and not to divulge its mysteries. Josephus computes the number of Essenes, in his time, to have been about four thousand.

What was meant, in the oath administered to the novices, by "guarding the names of the angels," may be conjectured from the notion, which commonly prevailed in the East, and in Egypt, concerning the power of demons, or angels, over the affairs of this world. It is probable that the Essenes, having adopted the visionary fancies of their Pagan neighbours concerning these superior natures, imagined themselves able, by the magical use of the names of angels, to perform supernatural wonders: and that the

⁷⁰ Joseph. de Bell. J. l. ii. c. 12. Ant. J. l. xviii. c. 2. l. xiii. c. 9. Philo de Essen. Op. p. 876, &c.

due observance of these mystical rites was the charge, which they bound themselves by oath to take, of the sacred names of the angels.⁷¹

From the silence of the Evangelists concerning this sect, and from several tenets and customs in which they differed from the rest of the Jews, some have supposed that they were a sect of Pagan philosophers, who adopted in part the Jewish manners. But this opinion is contrary to the express testimony of Philo and Josephus, who both speak of three sects of Jews; Sadducees, Pharisees, and Essenes. There can be no doubt, however, that this sect borrowed many things from the heathen philosophers, and particularly from the Pythagoreans, whom they nearly resembled in their manner of living. The truth seems to be, as we have already intimated, that they became acquainted with the doctrines and institutions of the Pythagoreans in Egypt; and that, adopting these as far as their reverence for the law of Moses would permit, they formed a distinct sect which subsisted after their return into Judea.

Philo mentions two classes of Essenes, of whom one followed a practical institution, the other professed a theoretical system. The latter he distinguishes by the name of the *Therapeutæ*. According to this writer,⁷² who is here our only authority, the *Therapeutæ*, so called, as it seems, from the extraordinary purity of their religious worship, were a contemplative sect, who, with a kind of religious frenzy, placed their whole felicity in the contemplation of the Divine Nature. Detaching themselves wholly from secular affairs, they transferred their property to their relations or friends, and withdrew into solitary places, where they devoted themselves to a holy life. The principal society of this kind was formed near Alexandria, where they lived, not far from each other, in separate cottages, each of which had its own sacred apartment, to which the inhabitant retired for the purposes of devotion. After their morning prayers, they spent the day in studying the law and the prophets, endeavouring, by the help of the commentaries of their ancestors, to discover some allegorical meaning

⁷¹ Vitring. de Vet. Synag. l. c. Goodwin Mos. et Aar. l. i. c. 12. § 23. Hottinger, l. c. Coloss. ii. 18.

⁷² De Vit. Contempl. Op. p. 891.

in every part. Besides this, they entertained themselves with composing sacred hymns in various kinds of metre. Six days of the week were, in this manner, passed in solitude. On the seventh day they met, clothed in a decent habit, in a public assembly; where, taking their places according to their age, they sat, with the right hand between the breast and the chin, and the left at the side. Then, some one of the elders, stepping forth into the middle of the assembly, discoursed, with a grave countenance, and a calm tone of voice, on the doctrines of the sect; the audience, in the mean time, remaining in perfect silence, and occasionally expressing their attention and approbation by a nod. The chapel where they met was divided into two apartments—one for the men, the other for the women. So strict a regard was paid to silence in these assemblies, that no one was permitted to whisper, or even to breathe aloud; but when the discourse was finished, if the question which had been proposed for solution had been treated to the satisfaction of the audience, they expressed their approbation by a murmur of applause. Then the speaker, rising, sung a hymn of praise to God, in the last verse of which the whole assembly joined. On great festivals, the meeting was closed with a vigil, in which sacred music was performed, accompanied with solemn dancing: and these vigils were continued till morning, when the assembly, after a morning prayer, in which their faces were directed towards the rising sun, was broken up. So abstemious were these ascetics, that they commonly eat nothing before the setting sun, and often fasted two or three days. They abstained from wine, and their ordinary food was bread and herbs.

Much dispute has arisen among the learned concerning this sect. Some have imagined them to have been Judaizing Gentiles;⁷³ but Philo supposes them to be Jews, by speaking of them as a branch of the sect of Essenes, and expressly classes them among the followers of Moses. Others have maintained, that the Therapeutæ were an Alexandrian sect of Jewish converts to the Christian faith,

⁷³ Langii Diss. Hal. 1721.

who devoted themselves to a monastic life.⁷⁴ But this is impossible, for Philo, who wrote before Christianity appeared in Egypt, speaks of this as an established sect. From comparing Philo's account of this sect with the state of philosophy in the country where it flourished, we conclude, that the Therapeutæ were a body of Jewish fanatics, who suffered themselves to be drawn aside from the simplicity of their ancient religion, by the example of the Egyptians and Pythagoreans. How long this sect continued is uncertain; but it is not improbable, that, after the appearance of Christianity in Egypt, it soon became extinct.

Besides the four principal sects of the Jews, the Karæites, the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and the Essenes, several others are mentioned by ancient writers; but they are either wholly fictitious, or of little consequence.

Among these sects there were, doubtless, many ingenious and able men, who, had their attention been turned towards philosophy, might have been eminent philosophers. But they were too deeply engaged in the study of their written and traditionary law, to pay much attention to science; and their history affords few particulars which can be brought within the design of this work. We must not, however, overlook the elegant moralist, Jeshuah ben Sirach; the celebrated doctors of the law, Hillel and Shammai; the learned Philo; and the useful historian Josephus.

Jeshua, the son of *Sirach*,⁷⁵ appears from his own testimony to have been a native of Jerusalem, and to have lived in the time of the high priest Eleazer, about three hundred years before Christ. The last high priest whom he mentions is Simeon, the son of Onias, who was immediately succeeded by Eleazer, whom he would doubtless have added to the rest, had he not been still living when *Jeshua* wrote. We are indebted to this *Jeshua* for a Moral Manual, which contains a summary of the ethics received among the Jews after the period of the prophets. It was originally written in Hebrew, and translated into

⁷⁴ Montefalcon Trad. Phil. de la Vie cont. Par. 1709. 8vo. Lettres, &c. sur les Therapeutes, Paris, 1712.

⁷⁵ Ch. l. v. 29. Joseph. Ant. Jud. l. xii. c. 2. Wolf. Bib. Heb. P. i. p. 256.

Greek by his grandson, at the beginning of the reign of Ptolemy Euergetes.⁷⁶ This piece, called the book of Ecclesiasticus, was formerly read by the Jews; but, after suffering much interpolation, it was at length prohibited. Passages extracted from this book are, however, still in the hands of the Jews, under the title of, The Sentences of Ben Sira.⁷⁷

Hillel, surnamed *Hassaken*, was born, at Babylon, of poor parents, but of the royal stock of David, in the year 112 before Christ. After residing forty years in Babylon, where he married and had a son, he removed with his family to Jerusalem, for the purpose of studying the law. *Shemaiah* and *Abdalion* were at that time eminent doctors in Jerusalem. *Hillel*, unable on account of his poverty to gain a regular admission to their lectures, spent a considerable part of the profits of his daily labour in bribing the attendants to allow him a place at the door of the public hall, where he might gather up the doctrine of these eminent masters by stealth; and when this expedient failed him, he found means to place himself at the top of the building near one of the windows. By unwearied perseverance, *Hillel* acquired a profound knowledge of the most difficult points of the law; in consequence of which, his reputation gradually rose to such a height, that he became the master of the chief school in Jerusalem. In this station he was universally regarded as an oracle of wisdom scarcely inferior to Solomon, and had many thousand followers. He had such command of his temper, that no one ever saw him angry. The name of *Hillel* is in the highest esteem among the Jews, for the pains which he took to perpetuate the knowledge of the traditionary law. He arranged its precepts under six general classes; and thus laid the foundation of that digest of the Jewish law, which is called the *Talmud*. *Hillel* is said to have lived to the great age of one hundred and twenty years.⁷⁸

Shammai,⁷⁹ one of the disciples of *Hillel*, deserted his

⁷⁶ Conf. Hieron. Præf. in Prov. Huet. Dem. Ev. Pr. ii. p. 253. Fabric. Bib. Gr. v. ii. p. 728, 9. ⁷⁷ Bartolocc. Bib. Rab. t. i. p. 680.

⁷⁸ Bartolocc. Bib. Rab. t. i. p. 784. Geiger. Comment. de Hill. et Sham. Altdorf. 1707. Matt. Lightfoot Hor. Heb. 4to. p. 373.

⁷⁹ Geiger. l. c.

school, and formed a college of his own, in which he taught dogmas contrary to those of his master. He rejected the oral law, and followed the written law only, in its literal sense. Hence he has been ranked among the Karæites. The schools of Hillel and Shammai long disturbed the peace of the Jewish church by violent contests, in which however the party of Hillel was at last victorious.

Among the Jews who inhabited Egypt, was born at Alexandria, of a noble and sacred family, *Philo*, a writer deservedly celebrated for his erudition. The exact time of his birth is not known; but, as he speaks of himself as old and grey-headed in the time of Caligula, when he was sent upon an embassy from his countrymen in Egypt to the emperor, which happened in the year 40, it is probable that he was born at least twenty years before the commencement of the Christian era.⁸⁰

Whilst he was young, *Philo* diligently applied himself to the study of Grecian eloquence and wisdom in the schools of the Sophists and philosophers. He was intimately conversant with the writings of Plato, whose philosophy was at this time highly esteemed in Alexandria, and made himself so perfectly master both of his doctrine and language, that it became a proverbial observation, "Either Plato philonized, or *Philo* platonized." After what manner *Philo* studied philosophy, will appear from a comparison of the nature of Jewish learning with the spirit of the Alexandrian schools. We have seen, that, from the time of the Ptolemies, the use of allegories had been borrowed by the Jews from their Egyptian neighbours; and that, by the help of these, Platonic and Pythagorean dogmas were introduced among them, as the concealed and symbolical sense of their own law. In this manner they were able, without seeming to be indebted to heathen philosophers, to make any use they pleased of their systems. We have also seen, that in Egypt these systems were adulterated with many dogmas from the Oriental philosophy, particularly on the subject of the Divine Nature. This philosophy, which had been so well received in Alexandria, *Philo* eagerly embraced; and, either for want of a perfect acquaintance

⁸⁰ Hieron. Cat. Scr. Eccl. c. ii. Suidas. Phot. Cod. 105.

with Jewish learning, or through a distaste for the simple doctrine of the Mosaic law literally understood, he, by the help of allegory, boldly interwove the Platonic dogmas with the doctrines of the sacred oracles, and ascribed them to Moses. It is, moreover, exceedingly probable, that he was herein, in some measure, influenced by the example of the Essenes and Therapeutæ; and that, though he did not adopt their manner of living, he imitated their method of philosophising; for he always speaks of them in the highest terms of commendation; and he describes his youthful studies and contemplations in language which perfectly agrees with the spirit of these sects.⁸¹

Whatever inclination Philo had towards the fanatical philosophy of the Essenes, his love of eloquence drew him off from contemplative pursuits, and immersed him in civil affairs. He visited Rome, at the request of his countrymen, to vindicate them from the calumnies with which they had been loaded by the Alexandrians. Though his embassy proved fruitless, he committed the substance of his Apology for the Jews to writing, and herein gave a favourable specimen of his learning, ability, and integrity. Eusebius relates, that after the death of Caligula this Apology was read in the Roman senate.⁸²

That Philo was acquainted with Grecian literature and philosophy sufficiently appears from his writings; but his fondness for allegorical interpretations is no proof of the solidity of his judgment. At the same time that he greatly admired, and closely followed, the Platonic system, in the adulterated state in which it was taught in the Alexandrian schools, he professed to derive the tenets of Platonism from the sacred writings, and even represented Plato as a disciple of Moses. Of this strange combination of Platonic refinements with the simple doctrine of the Hebrew scriptures, innumerable examples occur in his works.

In his book upon the creation of the world, Philo every where supposes the prior existence of Plato's world of Ideas; and represents the Deity as constructing visible nature after a model which he had first formed. He attri-

⁸¹ Jos. Ant. J. l. xviii. c. 18. Euseb. Hist. Ecc. l. ii. c. 4. Pr. Ev. l. vii. c. 12. Phil. de Special. Leg. Op. p. 769.

⁸² Jos. et Euseb. l. c.

brutes to Moses all the metaphysical subtleties of Plato upon this subject, and maintains, that the philosopher received them from the holy prophet: "God," says he,⁸³ "when he foresaw, in his Divine wisdom, that no fair imitation could possibly exist without a fair pattern, nor any sensible object be faultless, which did not correspond to the archetype of some intelligible idea, after he had decreed to make this sensible world, first formed an intelligible and incorporeal model, after which he might frame the material world; the latter containing as many kinds of sensible, as the former of intelligible natures. The ideal world must neither be represented, nor conceived, as circumscribed by space." Again,⁸⁴ "This intelligible world is, according to the Mosaic doctrine, no other than the Word, or Reason (*λογος*) of God now forming the world; and this Reason in the beginning produced heaven, which consists in pure essence, and is the destined habitation of gods both visible and invisible." "The Creator," adds he,⁸⁵ "framed, in the intelligible world, first of all, an incorporeal heaven, an invisible earth, and the image of air and space, and afterwards the incorporeal essence of water and light, and the intelligible pattern of the sun and all the stars."

After the example of the Alexandrian school, which combined the Pythagorean doctrine with the Platonic, Philo supposes the order of the visible world to have been adapted to the Pythagorean proportions and numbers. He maintains the immutability of the material world, upon the principle universally adopted by the ancients, that as from nothing, nothing can be produced, so nothing which exists can be annihilated: whence it may be inferred, that he conceived matter to be coeval with Deity.⁸⁶ He held the human soul to consist of three natures, the rational, the irascible, and the concupiscible.⁸⁷

Concerning the Deity, Philo every where makes use of the language of Plato rather than of Moses. He speaks of God as containing all things, but contained by none; as embracing all things within his bosom, and pervading every part of the universe. His language concerning the Divine

⁸³ De Opif. Mundi, p. 3.⁸⁴ P. 5.⁸⁵ P. 6. 9.⁸⁶ De Mundo incorrupt. p. 930, &c.⁸⁷ De Confus. Ling. p. 322. De Legis Alleg. p. 53.

Nature is so obscure and inconsistent, that it is difficult to discover, with accuracy, his real meaning. But, if those parts of his writings, in which he drops the popular language, and expresses his philosophical notions on this subject, be diligently compared, it will perhaps be found, that Philo supposed a quaternion of principles in the Divine Nature; the first fountain of Divinity, and three emanations from this fountain, each possessing a distinct, substantial existence, but all united in essence with the First Principle. The first of these emanations, which he called the *Logos*, he conceived to have been the Divine intellect, the seat of those ideas which form the intelligible world; and the second and third, to have been the substantial principles or powers by which the sensible world was created and governed. This doctrine of substantial emanations within the Divine Nature, was at this time received among the Platonists from the Oriental schools; and we shall afterwards find that it was the doctrine of the Jewish Cabbala. It is therefore probable that this was the doctrine concerning the Divine Nature embraced by this pupil of the Egyptian schools.

Philo, and other Egyptian Jews, who adopted the Oriental and Platonic philosophy, seem neither to have conceived of the *Logos*, and other primary emanations from the first fountain of Deity, as beings separate in nature and essence from God, not merely as simple attributes, but as substantial virtues or powers radically united in the Divine Essence, and distinct from the First Principle only in their peculiar mode of existing and acting; that is, they conceived, or imagined they conceived, a kind of middle nature, between beings who enjoy a separate existence and mere attributes or properties. This hypothesis may serve to cast a feeble ray of light upon those obscure passages, in which Philo speaks of God as the Being *who is*, and who has two most ancient powers nearest him, one on each side, of whom one is called the Maker, the other the Governor.³⁸ Again, "The Middle Divinity, attended on each side by his powers, presents to the enlightened mind, sometimes one image, sometimes three: *One*, when the soul, perfectly purified, passes beyond not only other numbers, but even

³⁸ De Abrahamo, p. 367.

that which is next to unity, the binary, and hastens to that which is strictly simple: *Three*, when, not yet initiated into the great mysteries, it is employed upon the less, and is unable to comprehend Him who Is, by himself alone without another, but sees him in his operations as the former or governor of all."⁸⁰

After what has been advanced, the Platonism of Philo cannot, on any solid ground of argument, be called in question. It must, however, be remembered, that his Platonism was of that adulterated kind, which at this time prevailed in Alexandria.

The works of Philo abound with proofs of genius and erudition, and may serve to cast great light upon the state of the Platonic philosophy at that period; but they discover, in every page, a want of sound and accurate judgment: and the allegorical style which he borrowed from the Egyptians has cast such a veil of obscurity over his writings, that it is, perhaps, in vain to attempt to explain them throughout: some have even presumed to question, whether Philo himself always clearly understood what he wrote.

Josephus,⁸⁰ the historian, was a native of Jerusalem, and a descendant of the illustrious Asmonean family: he was born in the year 37. At the age of fourteen, he had made great proficiency in the knowledge of the Jewish law. For the purpose of studying the history and tenets of the several Jewish sects, he became, for three years, a pupil of Banun, a hermit, who had acquired great fame for wisdom, and with him lived a recluse and abstemious life. After this, he addicted himself to the sect of the Pharisees, and engaged in civil affairs. Visiting Rome, in the twenty-sixth year of his age, he obtained access to Nero, and procured liberty for some of his countrymen. On his return home, he in vain attempted to persuade his fellow-citizens to submit quietly to the Roman yoke. At length, in the war of Vespasian, after an unsuccessful defence of the citadel of Jotapata, he was taken prisoner. After a short time, however, when Vespasian and Titus, according to a prediction which he is said to have delivered, came to

⁸⁰ De Abrahamo, l. c.

⁸⁰ Vit. Op. p. 298, &c. Ant. J. l. xx. c. 9.

the empire, he was restored to liberty. He now visited Egypt, and took up his residence at Alexandria, where he, doubtless, studied the Grecian and Egyptian philosophy.

Josephus accompanied Titus in the siege of Jerusalem, the memorable particulars of which he accurately minuted as they passed, and afterwards related at large in his Annals. He spent the latter part of his life at Rome, under the protection of Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian, and there wrote his Jewish Antiquities. He lived till after the thirteenth year of Domitian, when he wrote against Apion; but in what year he died is uncertain. His writings, at the same time that they discover an accurate knowledge of the affairs of his own country, shew an extensive acquaintance with Grecian learning and philosophy; but national vanity and partiality led him to imagine that all knowledge and wisdom had originated in Judea, and had flowed thence through all the nations of the earth; a notion which gave rise to many errors and misrepresentations in his writings, and which has since been too implicitly adopted by many Christian writers.⁹¹

⁹¹ Vidend. passim Reimann. Intr. in Hist. Theol. Jud. Carpzov. Intr. in Theol. Jud. Eisenmenger. Jud. Detect. Maii Theol. Jud. Wolfii Bibl. Hebr. Buddæi Introd. ad Hist. Ph. Heb. Barnage Hist. des Juifs. Reland. Diss. de Samaritan. Cellarius de Samar. Gent. Hist. Horbii de Orig. Simon Mag. Huntington. Epist. Lond. 1704. Antiq. Eccl. Or. Lond. 1683. Vossius de Septuag. Interp. Hag. Com. 1661. Van Dale Diss. de Aristeia. Hody contra Hist. Arist. Ox. 1684. et de Bibl. Text. Orig. et Vers. 1705. Nourry Apparat. Bibl. Diss. xii. Engelbach Diss. de Vers. Græc. Sept. antiquiore Viteb. 1706. Diss. de Vestig. Phil. Alex. in Libro Sapientiae, Misc. Berolin. t. vi. p. 150. Bartolocci Bim. Rabbin. Buddæi Hist. Eccl. Vet. T. Zeltzer de erud. Feminis Heb. Schudt. Memorab. Judaic. R. Mardochai de Karaïs. Trigland. Syntagma trium. Script. de Trib. Jud. Seetis. Delph. 1704. Drusii Tract. de Hasidæis. Serarii in Trihæreain contra Drus. Scalgeri Elench. Trihæresii Serarii. Shupart. de Sect. Karaeor. Jenæ, 1701. Goodwin's Moses and Aaron. Willmer Diss. de Sadduceis. Reland. Ant. Sac. Geiger. de Hillele et Shammai. Lightfoot Horæ Hebr. &c. Vitringa de Vet. Synag. Deyling. Diss. de Ascet. Obs. S. p. iii. Langii Diss. de Essæia, Ital. 1721. Wachter de Essenis. Clerici Epist. Crit. viii. Fabric. Diss. de Platon. Phil. Lips. 1693. in Sylloge Diss. Vander Wayen de λόγῳ. Got. Olear. Diss. de Vaticinio Josephi, Lips. 1690. Pfeiffer Theolog. Jud. Schoetgen. Jesus verus Mess. ex Theolog. Jud. dem. Lips. 1748. Wachter de Primordiis Chr. Rel.

CHAP. II.

OF THE STATE OF THE JEWISH PHILOSOPHY FROM THE
DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM TO MODERN TIMES.

AFTER the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dissolution of the Jewish state, the history of the dispersed Jews has little connexion with the history of philosophy. From this time to the Middle Age, we meet with nothing among them which claims our attention, except an excessive and absurd fondness for their traditionary institutions, and a kind of enthusiastic philosophy, called the Cabbalistic, which sprung from the Alexandrian schools, and mixed Oriental, Egyptian, Pythagoric, and Platonic notions with the simple doctrine of the Hebrew Scriptures. In process of time, when the Jews passed from the eastern to the western world, the Aristotelian philosophy, which became predominant among the Arabians, found its way into the Jewish schools.

In order to trace with precision the progress of the Jewish philosophy, it will be necessary to take a general survey of the state of Jewish learning at this period. Without this it would be impossible to discern, how far their Talmudic and Cabbalistic doctrines were grounded upon authority, and derived from their domestic sources; and how far they were borrowed from Gentile philosophy.

The devastation and ruin which fell upon the Jewish nation after the conquest of Vespasian and Titus, reduced them to so low and wretched a condition, that only a small number of learned men were left among them, to transmit their ancient doctrines and institutions to posterity. Of these, part escaped into Egypt, where a Jewish colony had resided from the time of Alexander; and part withdrew to Babylon, where also many Jews had remained from the time of the captivity. In both these countries, these Jewish refugees were humanely received.¹ An inconsiderable body of this unfortunate people still remained be-

¹ Joseph. Bell. J. l. vi. Conf. Basnage, l. iii. c. 1.

hind in the desolated country of Palestine. These collected the scattered fragments of Jewish learning from the general wreck into the school at Jafna² (frequently called by the Greek writers Jamnia) where they also revived their forms of worship. The Rabbi Jochanan was the founder of this school; and the good design which he begun was completed, as far as the state of the times would permit, by the Rabbi Gamaliel, who is from this circumstance called *Gamaliel Jafniensis*. The success which attended this school induced many of the dispersed Jews to return to Palestine: and another school was formed at Tiberias, which soon became the chief seat of Jewish learning in its native country. This school obtained immunities and privileges from the emperor Antoninus Pius; and it produced that curious record of Jewish wisdom, the Jerusalem Talmud. Other schools, after the example of Jafna and Tiberias, were erected at Bitterah, near Jerusalem, at Lydda or Diospolis, at Cæsarea, and (which became more celebrated than the rest) at Zippora, or Sephora, in Galilee.³

From this time, there was not wanting a succession of Jewish doctors to transmit their religion and philosophy to posterity. They are arranged in a series of seven classes,⁴ the last of which brings down the succession to the time when the Jews, enticed by the example of the Saracens and Christians, engaged in the study of the Aristotelian philosophy. In each of these classes there were, doubtless, men of ability; but the talents which nature bestowed upon them were wasted upon the trifling and absurd study of tradition, which, as tares choke the wheat, suppressed every manly exertion of reason. Or, if any among them attempted a superior kind of wisdom, they

² Joseph. Ant. J. l. xiv. c. 8. Bell. J. l. i. c. 6. Reland. Palest. l. iii. p. 823. Lightfoot. Cent. Chorogr. Matt. Proem. c. xv. t. ii. p. 181. R. D. Ganz in Zemaah David. p. 39. Buxtorf. Tib. c. 5. Lightf. Op. p. 87. Basnage, l. vi. c. 5. § 8.

³ Lightf. Cent. Ch. c. 81. 52. 16. 82. 76. 96. Reland. l. c. p. 409. 679. 877.

⁴ Pirke Abboth. Maimonid. in Præf. Jad. Hassakah. R. Abr. . B. Dior. in Cabbala. R. Zackhuth, in Juchasin. R. Gedalia in Shalsheth Hakkabala. Conf. Hen. Othon. Hist. Mishnic. cum Relandi Notis. Wolf. Bib. Heb. P. ii. p. 924.

soon lost themselves in the mysteries of Cabbalistic metaphysics. It is therefore wholly unnecessary, in this work, to enter into a minute detail of their history. Only it must be remembered, that these Jewish doctors flourished not only in Palestine, but in the Babylonish schools which were established at Sora, Pumbedithena, and other places near the Euphrates: and we must not omit particularly to mention the Rabbi *Jehuda Hakkadosh*,⁵ who adorned the school of Tiberias, and whose memory is so highly revered by the Jews, that they compare him with the Messiah. He was born about the year 120. The Jews relate many extravagant stories of this Rabbi: among the rest, they assert, that he made the emperor Marcus Antoninus a proselyte to Judaism, and that it was by his order that Jehuda compiled the Mishna.

The history of the Mishna is briefly this: the sect of the Pharisees, after the destruction of Jerusalem, prevailing over the rest, the study of traditions became the chief object of attention in all the Jewish schools. The number of these traditions had, in a long course of time, so greatly increased, that the doctors, whose principal employment it was to illustrate them, by new explanations, and to confirm their authority, found it necessary to assist their recollection by committing them under distinct heads to writing. At the same time their disciples took minutes of the explanations of their preceptors, many of which were preserved, and grew up into voluminous commentaries. The confusion which arose from these causes was now become so troublesome, that, notwithstanding what Hillel had before done in arranging the traditions, Jehuda found it necessary to attempt a new digest of the oral law, and of the commentaries of their most famous doctors. This arduous undertaking is said to have employed him forty years. It was completed, according to the unanimous testimony of the Jews, which in this case there is no sufficient reason to dispute, about the close of the second century. This Mishna, or first Talmud, comprehends all the laws, institutions, and rules of life, which, beside the ancient Hebrew Scriptures, the Jews supposed themselves bound to observe. Notwithstanding the obscurities, in-

⁵ Bartolocci. Bibl. Rab. t. iii. p. 79. Basnage, l. iii. c. 3. § 2—6.

consistencies, and absurdities with which this collection abounds, it soon obtained credit among the Jews as a sacred book.⁶

After all, however, the Mishna did not completely provide for many cases which arose in the practice of ecclesiastical law, and many of its prescriptions and decisions were found to require further comments and illustrations. The task of supplying these defects was undertaken by the Rabbis Chiam and Oschiam, and others, disciples of Jehudah; who not only wrote explanations of the Mishna, but made material additions to that voluminous compilation. These commentaries and additions were collected by the Rabbi Jochanan ben Eliezer, probably in the fifth century, under the name of the Gemara, because it completed the Mishna. This collection was afterwards called the Jerusalem Gemara, to distinguish it from another of the same kind made in Babylon, at the beginning of the sixth century. To these collections we must add the Mishnic treatise, called *Capitalia Patrum*, "A Compendium of the Moral Maxims and Sentiments of the Jewish Fathers:" it is an ancient compilation, probably made by Nathan, a Babylonian Rabbi, who flourished about the year 120.⁷

With the ritual and ecclesiastical precepts of the law, there was also taught in the Jewish schools a mystical kind of traditionary doctrine, which was called the Cabbala. In this metaphysical system we find the Jews, while they profess to follow the footsteps of Moses, turning aside into the paths of Gentile philosophy. The Jews pretend to derive their Cabbala from Esdras, Moses, Abraham, and Adam: but it is very evident from the Cabbalistic doctrine concerning Divine emanations, of which we shall speak more fully in the sequel, that it originated in Egypt; where the Jews learned, by the help of allegory, to mix Oriental, Pythagoric, and Platonic dogmas with Hebrew wisdom.

⁶ Maimon. Præf. ad Seder Saraim, et ad Jad. Chasaka. Morini Exerc. Bibl. l. i. c. 6. l. ii. ex. 6. c. 2. Basnage, l. iii. c. 6. § 6. Ottho Hist. D. Mishnic.

⁷ Vid. Hist. Lit. Scriptores Jud. R. Zachuth, R. David Ganz, R. Gedalia. Conf. Basnage, p. 139. Lightfoot Op. t. ii. p. 221. Morini Exerc. Bib. l. ii. ex. 10. c. i. Wolf, Bib. Heb. t. ii. p. 139.

These doctrines soon found their way into Palestine ; and, though at first the number of Mystics does not appear to have been great, after the dissolution of the republic, multitudes were wonderfully captivated with this sublime method of philosophising upon Divine subjects. Under the sanction of ancient names many fictitious writings were produced, which greatly contributed to the spread of this mystical system. Among these were *Sepher Happeliakh*, "The Book of Wonders;" *Sepher Hakkaneh*, "The Book of the Pen;" and *Sepher Habbakir*, "The Book of Light." The first unfolds many doctrines said to have been delivered by Elias to the Rabbi Elkanah; the second contains mystical commentaries on the Divine commands; the third illustrates the most sublime mysteries.⁸

Among the profound doctors, who, besides the study of tradition, cultivated with great industry the Cabbalistic philosophy, the most celebrated names are the Rabbis Akibha and Simeon ben Jochai. To the former is ascribed the book, entitled *Jezirah*, "Concerning the Creation;" to the latter, the book *Sohar*, or "Brightness;" which are the principal sources whence we derive our knowledge of the Cabbala.

Akibha, who lived soon after the destruction of Jerusalem, and had a school at Lydda, or Dioscopolis, was so famous a teacher that, if we may credit the Jewish accounts, he had twenty-four thousand disciples. In such high estimation was he held among the Jews of Palestine, that they did not scruple to say, that God revealed to Akibha what he had concealed from Moses. His book *Jezirah* was quoted as of Divine authority; an undoubted proof of the ignorance and superstition of the Jews at this period; for it is impossible to take the most cursory survey of its contents without perceiving that it abounds with trifles and absurdities.⁹ *

At the time when Akibha was far advanced in life, and

* Wolf. Bib. Heb. P. i. p. 198. 905. P. iii. p. 126, 7.

* Zemach. David. ad. An. Mund. 3760. Bayle. Lightfoot. Hor. Heb. t. ii. p. 449.

* E. g. Dixit R. Akibha: † "Ingressus sum aliquando post R. Jo-

† In tr. Talm. Massech Berach f. 62. col. 1.

had established extensive authority, appeared the famous impostor, Bar Cochbas, under the character of the Messiah, promising to deliver his countrymen from the power of the emperor Adrian. Akibha espoused his cause, and afforded him the protection and support of his name; and an army of two hundred thousand men repaired to his standard. The Romans at first slighted the insurrection; but, when they found that the insurgents spread slaughter and rapine wherever they came, they sent out a military force against them. At first, the issue of the contest was doubtful. After a short time, however, this pretended Messiah was blocked up, with his army, in the city of Bitterah: and after a siege of three years and a half, he was made prisoner, and with his followers put to the sword. In this carnage, Akibha, with his son Pappus, was flayed alive. This happened, according to the Jewish chronologists, in the year 120: Basnage places the event in the year 138.¹⁰ Akibha, after his death, was honoured by the Jews as an eminent doctor of their law; and his tomb, which they supposed to be at Tiberias, was visited with great solemnity. The Jewish writers assert, that Akibha received the *Jezirah* from Abraham;¹¹ but there can be little doubt that its doctrines flowed from the Cabbalistic fountain of the Jewish schools in Egypt. The work, whether written by Akibha, or one of his followers, has probably undergone interpolation.

Simeon ben Jochai,¹² who flourished in the second century, and was a disciple of Akibha, is called by the Jews the prince of the Cabbalists. After the suppression of the sedition, in which his master had been so unsuccessful, he concealed himself in a cave, where, according to the Jewish

suam in sedis secretæ locum, et tria ab eo didici: Didici primo, quod non versus orientem et occidentem, sed versus septentrionem et austrum nos convertere debeamus. Didici secundo, quod non in pedes erectum, sed jam consistentem se reterege liceat. Didici tertio, quod podex non dextra sed sinistra manu abstergendus sit. Ad hæc objecit ibi Ben Hasai: Uve adeo vero perfircuisti frontem ergo magistrum tuum ut cacantem observares? Respondit ille: Legis hæc arcana sunt, ad quæ discenda id necessarium mihi agendum fuit."—EN VERO EGREGIAM DOCTRINAM MORALEM!

¹⁰ Basnage, l. vii. c. 12. Lightfoot, t. ii. p. 280.

¹¹ R. Gedaliah, Hakkab. p. 28.

¹² Wolf. Bib. Heb. P. i. p. 702. Knorr. Præf. Cabb. Denud. p. ii.

historians, he received revelations, which he afterwards delivered to his disciples, and which they carefully preserved in the book, called *Sohar*. This book contains a summary of the Cabbalistic philosophy, expressed in obscure hieroglyphics and allegories. As this book has not been mentioned by any Jewish writer prior to the thirteenth century, its authenticity has been doubted; but its doctrine and method bear evident marks of antiquity, and render it exceedingly probable, that it is, in the main, a true representation of the doctrine which the Cabbalistic Jews derived from the Egyptian schools.¹³

From the third century to the tenth few traces of the Cabbalistic philosophy are to be met with in the writings of the Jews. The probable reason is, that these mysteries, which differ materially from the ancient doctrine of the Jewish church, were entrusted only to the initiated, and this under a solemn oath of secrecy; whence few persons would venture to commit them to writing. If any such books were written, they would, doubtless, be with great industry concealed from public inspection; or if they happened to fall into the hands of an uninitiated Jew, their enigmatic language would be a seal upon their meaning, not to be broken by a vulgar hand. Add to this, that the Jews were for many centuries deeply involved in controversy concerning their traditionary law, and if they were possessed of Talmudical erudition, thought themselves sufficiently learned; and that the whole nation was oppressed and harassed by persecution.

Jewish learning, which, from the time of the dispersion of this unfortunate people, had declined, began to revive at the period when the Saracens became the patrons of philosophy. In the tenth century, the schools of Sora and Pumbeditha again flourished under new preceptors.¹⁴ The Rabbi *Saadias Gaon*,¹⁵ a native of Egypt, in the year 927, took the charge of the school of Sora, where he restored the study of literature and philosophy. He wrote a work, entitled "The Philosopher's Stone," which is not, as might

¹³ Knorr. ed. Solisbach. 1684. Amst. 1714.

¹⁴ Basnage, l. ix. c. 4. § 2.

¹⁵ Ganzii Zemach David, p. 51. Zachuthi Juchasin, p. 119, &c. Gedalia Shalsheleth Hakkabala, p. 38. Basnage, ib.

be expected, Alchemic, but Cabbalistic: he also wrote "A Compendium of Jewish Theology," in which he not unskilfully illustrates its principal heads by philosophical reasoning. In the eleventh century, a school was instituted at Pherez Skibber, in which the Rabbis *Sherira Gaon*, and his son *Hai*, presided. The former wrote notes upon the Mishna and Gemara; and the latter illustrated the Cabbalistic philosophy by a treatise concerning Divine names, and a comment upon the book *Jezirah*. With them expired the Jewish learning in the East.

The Jews being now violently persecuted by the Saracens, fled from the eastern to the western world, and found an asylum in Spain, where they boast that the family of David is preserved. Here they opened new schools, and cultivated Talmudic learning and Cabbalistic philosophy. About the beginning of the twelfth century, the Talmud was translated into Arabic, and a Talmudic lexicon was published; after which, many commentators upon the Talmud, and many Cabbalistic writers, appeared.¹⁶

The attention which was now paid to the writings of Aristotle, both by Arabians and Christians, among whom the Stagyrte was every where extolled as the oracle of truth, excited the emulation of the Jews; and they, from this time, addicted themselves to the study of the Peripatetic philosophy. This innovation, so inconsistent with the reverence which they professed to entertain for the law, and the traditions of their fathers, was exceedingly displeasing to the zealous advocates for Talmudic learning; who easily perceived, that as the one gained credit the other must decline. The ancient curse denounced upon the Jew who should instruct his son in Grecian learning was revived; and in the year 1280, the Rabbi who presided in the synagogue of Barsina, *Solomon ben Abraham ben Adrath* (called by way of contraction *Rashba*) prohibited the study of Gentile philosophy.¹⁷ Notwithstanding all this, however, the Jews persevered in their philosophical pursuits, and, from the twelfth century, distinguished themselves by their knowledge of mathematics and physics. *Isaac ben Said* constructed astronomical tables;¹⁸ and

¹⁶ Basnage, l. ix. c. 10. l. vii. c. 9. Schudt. Mem. Jud. l. iv. c. 9.

¹⁷ Shalsheth. p. 58. Wolf. p. 1033.

¹⁸ Juchasin. p. 132.

Isaac Israel Toletanus was an eminent astronomer and chronologer.¹⁹

To facilitate the study of Aristotle among the Jews, his writings were translated (it may be presumed, not very accurately) from the Arabic (for the Greek was at this time little read) into the Hebrew tongue. Several other ancient works, particularly the Elements of Euclid, and the medical writings of the Greeks, towards the close of the thirteenth century, appeared in a Hebrew dress. So highly was the name of Aristotle now respected among the Jews, that they not only called him the prince of philosophers, but maintained that his philosophy was the perfection of human science, and could only be excelled by the doctrine of Divine Revelation. In order to screen themselves from censure for submitting to receive wisdom from a heathen philosopher, they pretended that Aristotle was himself a proselyte to Judaism, and was indebted to Solomon for a great part of his philosophy.²⁰ The Rabbi *Chanania ben Isaac* wrote "Institutes of the Philosophers," a collection of moral precepts and apophthegms from the ancients. In the work already mentioned, written about this time, under the title of *Cosri*, or, more accurately, *Hachosari*,²¹ Aristotelian principles were employed in demonstrating the truth of the Jewish religion: it may be considered as a specimen of Jewish philosophy in the Middle Age.

The most celebrated names among the learned Jews of this period are *Abraham ben Muir aben Esra*, and *Moses ben Maimon*, or *Maimonides*.

Aben Esra was born at Toledo, in Spain, and flourished about the middle of the twelfth century. On account of his profound erudition, he was not only called the Wise, but the Great, and the Wonderful. He travelled for the purpose of acquiring knowledge, and far surpassed his brethren both in sacred and profane learning. He wrote theological, grammatical, mathematical, and astrological works, many of which remain in ancient libraries, not yet edited.²²

¹⁹ Wolf. p. 663.
R. A. Tibbon.

²⁰ Wolf. p. 383. 655. 217. Maimon. Ep. ad.

²¹ Shalsheth. p. 40. Wolf. p. 440.

²² Shalsheth. p. 41. Juchasin, p. 131. Zemach D. ad. A. 4034.
Wolf. p. 146. 764.

Maimonides, who holds a distinguished place among the learned of this age, was born at Cordova, in Spain, in the year 1131. Among his preceptors was Averroës the Arabian. Through his superior genius and industry, he acquired a degree of learning which excited the jealousy and envy of his countrymen: perhaps, too, his connexion with Averroës might lead him to adopt obnoxious opinions. It has been asserted, that he became a convert to Mahometanism; but this wants proof. Whatever was the cause, which it is not now easy to discover, it is certain that Maimonides found his residence in Spain troublesome and hazardous, and removed into Egypt, where he settled at Cairo. Here his learning and talents engaged the notice of the Sultan of Egypt, Malich El Hadul, who employed him as his physician. Maimonides instituted a school at Alexandria, where he had many followers, who were, however, soon afterwards dispersed by persecution. Some say, that he died in Egypt, in the year 1201; others, that he died in Palestine, in the year 1205.²³

This learned Jew was not only master of many eastern languages, but, which was a rare accomplishment at that time, was well acquainted with the Greek tongue; in which he seems to have read the works of Plato, Aristotle, Themistius, Galen, and others. He confesses, that he had been much conversant with the writings of philosophers. As a physician he possessed high reputation: he was a good logician, and had a competent knowledge of mathematics. In Talmudic learning he excelled all his contemporaries. Besides many other works,²⁴ he wrote a treatise "On Idolatry;" another, "On the Theology of the Gentiles;" and a third, "On Allegorical Language;" which discovered great learning, but leaned towards Gentile philosophy more than his countrymen approved. A singular proof of his fondness for the Aristotelian doctrines, and, at the same time, a curious specimen of the absurd method of allegorizing, adopted even by the more intelligent among the Jews, we meet with in his explanation of the sapphire stone, which Moses saw under the feet of the God of Israel, the

²³ Juhasin. p. 131. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. xiii. p. 296. Shalsheleth. p. 43. Bannage, l. ix. c. 10. Wolf. p. 865.

²⁴ Ed. Basil. 1629. Epist. Venet. 1545.

whiteness of which he understood to denote the Ὑλὴ πρώτη, first matter, of Aristotle.²⁵ *

CHAP. III.

OF THE JEWISH PHILOSOPHY, EXOTERIC AND CABBALISTIC.

THE philosophy of the Jews, which is inseparably connected with their theology, differed essentially from that of the Greeks, in the sources from which it was derived. Whilst the several Grecian sects of philosophers applied the powers of the human understanding to every subject of speculation, and attempted to establish all their tenets upon the ground of rational argument, the Jews professed to derive all their knowledge from Divine Revelation, either in the Mosaic law, or in the traditions and decisions of their Fathers. Although the Jewish doctors distinguished between such doctrines as may be known from the principles of reason, and such as rest upon traditional, oral, or written, they in fact made little use of this distinction, and were satisfied with nothing which could not be supported by authority. Even in maintaining those doctrines which might have been established by rational arguments, they relied more upon tradition than reason; and, by the help of allegorical interpretations, found in their sacred books whatever tenets they had either borrowed from others, or framed in their own imaginations. In the writings of men, who thus forsook the pure doctrine of revelation in search of fictions, and who, nevertheless, had no confidence in the natural powers of the human mind, it is in vain to expect much that can deserve the name of philosophy.

* Conf. Budd. *Intr. Hist. Heb.* p. 167. Basnage, l. ix. p. 277.

* Vidend. passim. Zeltner. *Diss. de Beruria.* Altdorf. 1714. R. Moses Mikkozi lib. *Præcept.* Maimonid. *Præf. ad Seder Saraim.* Buxtorf. *Re-censio Op. Talm.* Z. Crapius in *Idea Talmud.* Hier. Lips. 1695. Jo. A. Lent. *Mod. Theol. Jud.* Wagensoil ad Sota. Morini *Exerc. Bibl. Leo African.* Maimon. in *Præf. Jad. Hassakah.* Dior. in *Cabbala.* Zachuth in *Juchasin.* Gedalia in *Shalsheleth Hakkabala.* Gantz. *Zemach David.* Otthon. *Hist. Mishnaic.* Wolf. Basnage, Reland, Lightfoot, Hottinger, Budaëus, Prideaux, &c.

Two methods of instruction were in use among the Jews; the one, public or exoteric; the other, secret or esoteric. The exoteric doctrine was that which was openly taught the people from the law of Moses and the traditions of the Fathers. The esoteric was that which treated of the mysteries of the Divine Nature, and other sublime subjects, and was known by the name of the Cabbala. The latter was, after the manner of the Pythagorean and Egyptian mysteries, taught only to certain persons, who were bound, under the most solemn *anathema*, not to divulge it.

The exoteric doctrine comprehended the popular articles of faith and rules of manners. These were not reduced into a systematic form till the middle of the tenth century; when the Rabbi Saadias Gaon, the master of the school at Sora, wrote a book in the Arabic language concerning the Faith,¹ which Jehudah Tibbon translated into Hebrew. The articles of the Jewish faith were afterwards reduced by Maimonides to thirteen, which were generally received, though not without some opposition, in the Jewish church.² Ethics were so little studied among the Jews, that, in their whole compilation called the Talmud, there is only one treatise on moral subjects. After the Peripatetic doctrine was received among them, some attention was paid to Aristotle's doctrine of morals; and, among the Jews, in the western world, we find, from the eleventh century, many writers, who treat upon the practical rules of life and manners, not however without a mixture of allegory and mysticism. Their books of morals chiefly consisted in a minute enumeration of duties. From the law of Moses were deduced six hundred and thirteen precepts, which were divided into two classes, affirmative and negative, two hundred and forty-eight in the former, and three hundred and sixty-five in the latter. These may be seen in the Jewish catechism, and in a Talmudic treatise, entitled *Meccoth*.³ It may serve to give the reader some idea of the low state of moral philosophy among the Jews in the Middle Age, to add, that of the two hundred and forty-eight affirmative precepts, only *three* were considered as

¹ Budd. Intr. Hist. Ph. Heb. § 32.

² Wolf. p. 867. Basnage, l. iv. c. i. § 1. Schudt. Mem. J. p. ii. l. vi. c. 27. § 18. Maimon. Ed. Vorstii. Amst. 1638.

obligatory upon women; and that, in order to obtain salvation, it was judged sufficient to fulfil any one single law in the hour of death; the observance of the rest being deemed necessary, only to increase the felicity of the future life.* What a wretched depravity of sentiment and manners must have prevailed before such corrupt maxims could have obtained credit! It is impossible to collect from these writings any thing like a consistent series of moral doctrine. Of their *popular theoretic tenets* the following is a brief summary.

The Creator is One; there is none like him, and he alone has been, is, and will be. The existence of God is nothing but his essence and truth. The foundation of wisdom is to know, that God is the first being, and that he gives existence to all others. The essence of God cannot be comprehended by the human understanding; he can only be known by his attributes and name. In the name of יהוה Jehovah there is great power; and it is unlawful for any man to utter it, except the priest when he pronounces the holy benediction. The nature of God is incorporeal and spiritual; simple essence, without composition or accident; intellect, in perpetual act. His duration, both past and future, is infinite. God is not so properly said to be in place, as to be himself place, for all space is full of his glory. God is the omniscient and sovereign Lord of the universe; he foresees and ordains all things; but all evil is to be ascribed to the free will of man.

The world was created from nothing, had a beginning, and will have an end. All human souls were created at the beginning of the world, and existed in a happy state before they were sent down into the body: besides these, there are other created spirits, good and bad, of various names and classes. The bad angels are corporeal, their bodies consisting of the two elements of air and fire. The heavens are animated; and the stars are rational beings, endued with the powers of intelligence and volition; they have an influence upon human affairs, and even upon inferior animals, plants, and minerals, and communicate to men the knowledge of future events. Different regions of

* Wolf. ib. p. 744. 221. 571. Jo. A. Lent. Theol. Jud. c. xiv. § 3. Lev. Mutinens de Carim. Jud. p. v. c. 4.

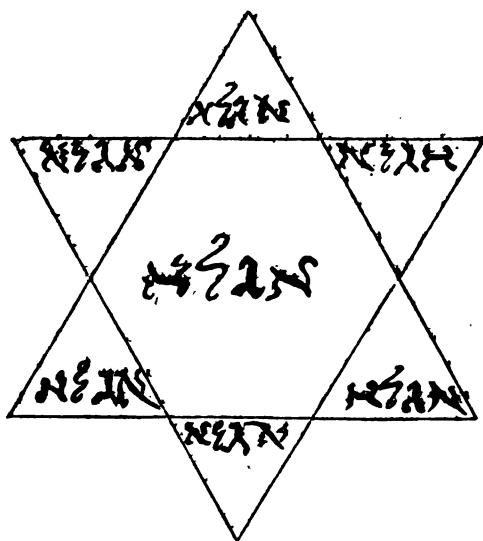
the earth, and even individual men, have their ministering angels. Two archangels were the leaders of a rebellion against God; and the rebels were cast out of heaven. The fallen angels, procreating with the daughters of men, produced giants and devils. The cause of natural death, and of all the calamities of mankind, is the fall of our first parents. No human being can attain to perfection; but good works are entitled to reward; and the pardon of sin may be obtained by fastings, prayers, confessions, and bodily sufferings. All the laws of Moses are eternal and immutable. The soul of man is a thinking substance, having three faculties; the vegetative, the sensitive, and the rational: it is possessed of liberty, and is immortal. After death it is not immediately admitted to celestial joys, but wanders in this world, chiefly about its body, during which time it is tormented by evil demons: in this purgatory it is cleansed from its stains; after which it passes into other bodies of men, or inferior animals. There will be a resurrection of the bodies of dead men, and an universal judgment, which will be succeeded by a state of retribution. The good will enjoy eternal life in Paradise, and the wicked will be consigned to the infernal regions; the Jew for a time, but the infidel for ever. The world will be destroyed; but the materials of which it is composed will remain.⁵

Many of the most valuable parts of these tenets, the Jews unquestionably derived from their sacred Scriptures; the rest they borrowed from their Gentile neighbours. They first suffered their doctrine to be corrupted by the Egyptian philosophy; and afterwards, learned from the Saracens to reason after the Peripatetic manner upon metaphysical subjects: examples of which may be seen in the writings of Maimonides, and in the book *Cosri*.

The superstitious notions and practices of the Jews, in the Middle Age, concerning the names of God, were singular. Of these they reckoned seventy-two; from which, by different arrangements in sevens, they produced seven

⁵ Maimond. *Moreh Nebhochim*, et *Jesode Thora*. R. Jos. Albo *Fund. Fid.* Basnage, l. iv. c. 6. Lightfoot. *Hor. Heb.*

hundred and twenty. The principal of these was **אגלא** *Agla*,⁶ which they disposed in the following figure:



This they called *The Shield of David*, and pretended that it was a security against wounds, and would extinguish fires, and was able to perform other wonders.⁷

The Esoteric or concealed doctrine of the Jews was called the *Cabbala*, from the word **קבל**, which signifies, *to receive*, because it had been received by tradition. Concerning the miraculous origin and preservation of the *Cabbala*, the Jews relate many marvellous tales. They derive these mysteries from Adam; and assert, that whilst the first man was in Paradise, the angel Rasiel brought him a book from heaven, which contained the doctrines of heavenly wisdom; and that when Adam received this book, angels came down to him to learn its contents, but that he refused to admit them to the knowledge of sacred things, entrusted to him alone; that after the fall, this book was taken back into heaven; that, after many prayers and tears, God restored it to Adam; and

⁶ Contracted from **אתה נבר לעולם אדני**; thou art strong in the eternal God.

⁷ Fabric. Cod. Apoc. V. T. t. ii. p. 1006. t. iii. p. 143.

that it passed from Adam to Seth.⁸ The Jewish fables go on to relate, that the book being lost, and the mysteries it contained almost forgotten, in the degenerate age before the flood, they were restored, by special revelation, to Abraham, who committed them to writing in the book *Je-zirah*; that the revelation was renewed to Moses, who received a traditionary and mystical, as well as a written and preceptive, law from God; that being again lost amidst the calamities of the Babylonish captivity, it was once more revealed to Esdras; that it was preserved in Egypt, and has been transmitted to posterity through the hands of Simeon ben Setach, Elkanah, Akibha, Simeon ben Jochai, and others.⁹

All that can be inferred from these accounts, which bear the evident marks of fiction, is, that the Cabbalistic doctrine obtained early credit among the Jews as part of their sacred tradition, and was transmitted, under this notion, by the Jews in Egypt to their brethren in Palestine. That this system was not of Hebrew origin may be concluded, with a great degree of probability, from the total dissimilarity of its abstruse and mysterious doctrines to the simple principles of religion taught in the Mosaic law; and that it was borrowed from the Egyptian schools will presently appear, from a comparison of its tenets with those of the Oriental and Alexandrian philosophy. Many writers have indeed imagined, that they have found, in the Cabbalistic dogmas, a near resemblance of the doctrines of Christianity, and have been of opinion, that the fundamental principles of this mystical system were derived from Divine Revelation. But this opinion is to be traced up to a prejudice, which began with the Jews, and passed from them to the Christian Fathers, by which they were led to ascribe all Pagan wisdom to a Hebrew origin; a notion which, there can be little room to doubt, took its rise in Egypt, where Pagan tenets first crept in among the Jews. When they first embraced the doctrines of Heathen philo-

⁸ Elschmenger. *Jud. Detect.* p. i. c. 8. p. ii. c. 13. Basnage, l. iii. c. 10. Wachter. *Elucid. Cabbal.* c. 1. § 1. Lib. *Sohar*. par Berasheith. col. 171.

⁹ Buxtorf. *Bib. Rabb.* p. 184. Ranchlin. *de arte Cabb.* l. i. p. 622. Wolf. *Bib. H.* p. i. p. 112. Reimann. *Hist. Th. Jud.* l. i. c. 15. Budl. *Intr.* p. 424. Coari. p. iii. § 65.

sophy, neither their national vanity, nor their reverence for the law of Moses, would suffer them to acknowledge themselves indebted to Pagans for their wisdom: they had, therefore, nothing left but to profess to derive these new opinions from their sacred writings, and, by the help of the allegorical method of interpretation taught them by the Egyptians, to reconcile them, as well as they were able, with the ancient doctrines of their religion. In support of this pretence, they supposed that the stream of wisdom, which they professed to derive from their own sacred fountain, had formerly flowed out of their inclosure into the neighbouring countries; and that the Oriental, Egyptian, and Grecian schools had been at first indebted to the land of Israel for their knowledge. Philo, Josephus, and other learned Jews, to flatter their own vanity, and that of their countrymen, industriously propagated this opinion; and the more learned fathers of the Christian church, who thought highly of the Grecian, particularly of the Platonic philosophy, hastily adopted it, imagining that if they could trace back the most valuable doctrines of Paganism to an Hebrew origin, this could not fail to recommend the Jewish and Christian religions to the attention of Gentile philosophers. Many learned moderns, relying implicitly upon these authorities, have maintained the same opinion, and have hence been inclined to credit the report of the Divine original of the Jewish Cabbala: but both these opinions are equally without foundation. In tracing the ancient Barbaric and Grecian philosophy to their sources, it has sufficiently appeared, that they were not of Hebrew extraction:¹⁰ and we shall soon see that the Cabbalistic

¹⁰ In further confirmation of what has been already advanced upon this point, it may be remarked, that those who have supposed the Chaldean and Egyptian philosophy to have originated with the Hebrews, have not considered that Thoth, Hermes Trismegistus, the Chaldean Zoroaster, and other founders of the ancient Barbaric philosophy, were prior in time to Moses, and even to Abraham. Besides, if it were granted that there were, among the Hebrews, patriarchs coeval with the first Chaldean or Egyptian sages, it still remains, to shew by what means the former could have prevailed upon the latter to become their disciples, and to adduce some plausible evidence that this was in fact the case. It is wonderful, that any learned men should have maintained, that the Egyptians were indebted to the Israelites for their wisdom, when it appears from the sa-

system is fundamentally inconsistent with the pure doctrine of Divine Revelation.

The truth, as far as we have been able to develop it, after a careful comparison of the various opinions which have been advanced with the ancient records which remain upon this subject, may be thus briefly stated. The Jews, as their own writers attest, like other Oriental nations, from the most remote period, had secret doctrines or mysteries. During the prophetic ages, these, probably, consisted in a simple explanation of those Divine truths which the prophets delivered under the veil of emblems. After this period, when the sects of the Essenes and Therapeutæ were formed, as we have seen, in Egypt, foreign tenets and institutions were borrowed from the Egyptians and Greeks, and, in the form of allegorical interpretations of the law, were admitted into the Jewish mysteries. These innovations chiefly consisted in certain dogmas concerning God and Divine things, at this time received in the Egyptian schools, particularly at Alexandria, where the Platonic and Pythagorean doctrines on these subjects had undergone a material alteration, by being mixed with the Oriental philosophy. For the Alexandrian Platonists, having rejected the Dualistic System, had now, from the Orientalists, adopted the Emanative, and admitted the doctrine of various orders of Divine emanation. This doctrine, which by the help of allegory was easily accommodated to the sacred writings, was embraced, under the notion of tradition-

ered history, that the Egyptians treated the Israelites with contempt, as a race of foreign slaves; and that the descendants of Jacob inhabited a separate region, where they had little intercourse with the natives of Egypt. Is there a shadow of probability, that the Egyptians would borrow from such a people any part of their sacred mysteries? But, if even this were allowed to be probable, still, the difference between the ancient Hebrew religion, and that of the Egyptians and other nations, is too great, to leave any room for admitting the fact. If then it be wholly inconceivable that the ancient Egyptians should have received their dogmas from the Hebrews, it must be admitted as highly probable that when, in later times, a wonderful agreement appears between the Jewish and Egyptian tenets, the Jews borrowed their Cabbalistic dogmas from the Alexandrians, among whom they resided.*

* Conf. Reuchlin. de Art. Cabb. l. ii. p. 642. Wachter. Spinoz. Jnd. p. ii. p. 231. Burnet Arch. l. i. c. 7.

ary mystery, by Aristobulus, and other founders of the sect of the Therapeutæ, and admitted into their writings, as may be seen in the works of Philo. The Jewish mysteries, thus enlarged by the accession of Pagan dogmas, were conveyed from Egypt to Palestine, at the time when the Pharisees, who had been driven into Egypt under Hyrcanus, returned, and with them many other Jews, into their own country. From this time the Cabbalistic mysteries continued to be taught in the Jewish schools; till, at length, they were adulterated by the mixture of Peripatetic doctrines, and other tenets, which sprang up in the Middle Age. These mysteries were not, probably, reduced to any systematic form in writing, till after the dispersion of the Jews, when, in consequence of their national calamities, they became apprehensive that these sacred treasures would be corrupted, or lost. In succeeding periods, the Cabbalistic doctrines underwent various corruptions, particularly from the prevalence of the Aristotelian philosophy.¹¹

This account of the rise and progress of the Jewish Cabala agrees with the facts before recited, and is confirmed by the resemblance observable between the features of the Oriental and Cabbalistic systems, as far as the veil of metaphor and allegory, with which they are covered will permit us to compare them. The obscurity of the Cabbalistic philosophy is indeed such, that there is some reason to question whether the authors themselves clearly understood what they wrote: a suspicion which may always arise, where metaphysical ideas, which are only to be understood by mental abstraction, are represented under sensible images. It is probable, however, that the writers supposed themselves to have some meaning, in works upon which they bestowed much time and ingenuity: and it becomes a matter of curiosity to inquire what meaning lies concealed under the apparent jargon. Perhaps more pains has been taken to make this discovery than the subject deserves: but as others have laboured with indefatigable industry, and not without some degree of success, in exploring the mazes of this labyrinth,¹² we must not fly from the under-

¹¹ Wachter. *Elucid. Cabb.* c. ii. p. 19. Knorr. *Cabb. Denud.* t. ii. p. 389. 181. Philo. *Op.* p. 877. 893. Maimon. *Mor. Nebh.* l. iii. c. 4. Wolf. *Bibl. Heb.* p. ii. l. vii. c. 1.

¹² Badd. *Intr.* § 35. 46. *Hist. Ph. H.* l. i. c. 10. Wachter. *Spinoz.* p. i.

taking as desperate; and we may possibly find in the result, that it is not wholly unprofitable. It will be necessary, however, before we proceed, to premise, that our inquiry only respects the theoretical part of the Cabbala; and that we pay no attention, either to the Enigmatical Cabbala, which consists in certain symbolical transpositions of the words or letters of the Scriptures, fit only for the amusement of children, and those who delight in anagrams and acrostics, or to the Practical Cabbala, which professed to teach the art of curing diseases, and performing other wonders, by means of certain arrangements of sacred letters and words.¹³

The chief heads of the *Cabbalistic doctrine* are these:

From nothing, nothing can be produced; since the distance between existence and non-entity is infinite. Matter is too imperfect in its nature, and approaches too near to non-entity to be self-existent. The Being, from whom all things proceed is a spirit, uncreated, eternal, intelligent, percipient, having within itself the principles of life and motion existing by the necessity of its nature, and filling the immensity of space. This spirit is *En-soph*, the Infinite Deity. This Eternal Fountain of Existence sends forth from himself natures of various orders, which, nevertheless, are still united to their source. The world is a permanent emanation from the Deity, in which his attributes and properties are unfolded, and variously modified. The nearer any emanation is to the First Fountain, the more perfect and Divine is its nature; and the reverse.

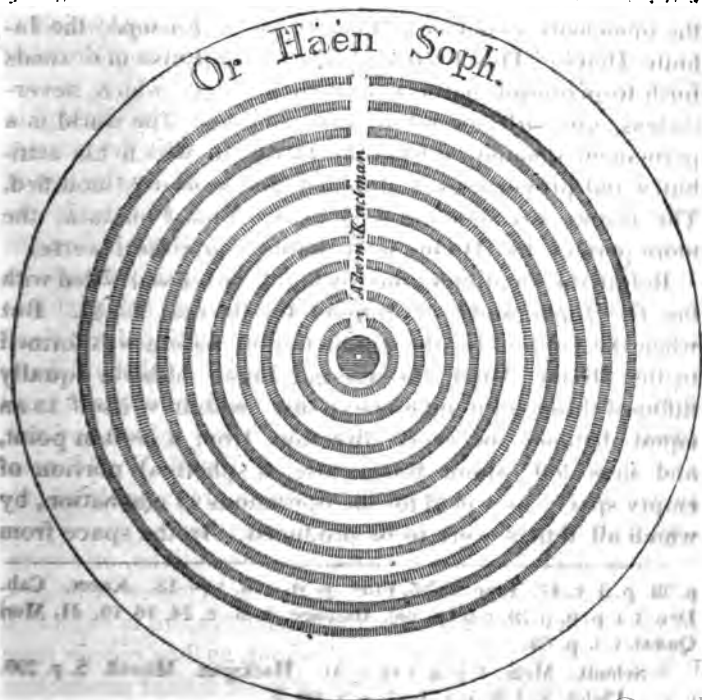
Before the creation of the world, all space was filled with the *Or Haen-Soph*, or Infinite Intellectual Light. But when the volition for the production of nature was formed in the Divine Mind, the Eternal Light, hitherto equally diffused through the infinite expanse, withdrew itself to an equal distance, in every direction, from a certain point, and thus left, about this centre, a spherical portion of empty space, as a field for the operations of emanation, by which all things were to be produced. In the space from

p. 22. p. ii. c. 17. *Eluc. Cabb. Præf.* p. vi. c. 3. § 1—13. Knorr. *Cab. Den.* t. i. p. ii. p. 79. t. ii. p. 390. Basnage, l. iii. c. 14, 16, 19. H. Mori. *Quest.* t. i. p. 62.

¹³ Schudt. *Mem. J.* p. ii. l. vi. c. 31. Hackspan. *Miscell. S.* p. 290. *Glassii Philol. S.* l. ii. p. i. tr. 2. a. 3. art. 2.

which the Divine Light was thus withdrawn, there were still, however, some portions, or traces, left of the Divine presence, which were to become the receptacle of rays sent forth from the Eternal Fountain, or the basis of future worlds. From a certain part of the concavity of Infinite Light which surrounded the opaque sphere, the energy of emanation was first exerted, and rays were sent forth in right lines into the dark abyss. The beam of light, thus produced, formed a channel, through which streams were to flow for the production of worlds. This beam was united to the Concave of Light, and was directed towards the centre of the opaque sphere. From this luminous channel streams of light flowed, at different distances from the centre, in a circular path, and formed distinct circles of light, separated from the Concave of Light, or from each other, by portions of dark or empty space. Of these circles of light, ten were produced, which may be called *Sephira*, or *Splendors*.¹⁴

The reader's imagination may perhaps be assisted by the following diagram :



The rectilineal beam of light, which is the First Emanation from the Eternal Fountain, and is itself the source of all other emanations, may be distinguished by the name *Adam Kadman*, the First Man, the first production of Divine Energy, or, the Son of God. The Sephiræ are fountains of emanation subordinate to Adam Kadman, which send forth rays of Divine light, or communicate essence and life to inferior beings. The ten Sephiræ are known, according to the order of emanation, by the names, Intelligence, or the Crown, Knowledge, Wisdom, Strength, Beauty, Greatness, Glory, Stability, Victory, Dominion. These are not the instruments of the Divine operations, but *media*, through which the Deity diffuses himself through the sphere of the universe, and produces whatever exists. They are not beings detached from the Deity, but substantial virtues or powers, distinctly, but dependently, sent forth from the eternal source of existence through the mediation of Adam Kadman, the first emanating power, and becoming the immediate source of existence to subordinate emanations. They are dependent upon the first fountain, as rays upon a luminary, which is conceived to have sent them forth with a power of drawing them back, at pleasure, into itself.

The first Infinite Source of Being is the Ensophic World, or world of infinity, within which, after the manner above described, four worlds are produced by the law of emanation, according to which the superior is the immediate source of the inferior: these are, *Aziluth*, or the World of Emanation, including the Sephiræ; *Brish*, or the World of Creation, containing certain spiritual natures, which derive their essence from the Sephiræ; *Jezi-rah*, or the World of Forms, composed of substantial natures, derived from the superior spiritual substances, and placed within ethereal vehicles, which they inform and animate; and *Asiah*, or the Material and Visible World, comprehending all those substances which are capable of motion, composition, division, and dissolution.

These derived worlds are different evolutions, or expansions, of the Divine Essence, or distinct classes of beings, in which the infinite light of the Divine Nature is exhibited with continually decreasing splendour, as they recede from the First Fountain. The last and most distant production

of the Divine energy of emanation is Matter; which is produced when the Divine light, by its recession from the fountain, becomes so attenuated as to be lost in darkness, leaving nothing but an opaque substance,¹⁵ which is only one degree above nonentity. Matter has no separate independent existence, but is merely a modification, and permanent effect, of the emanative energy of the Divine nature.

The Sephiræ, or first order of emanative being, existing in Aziluth, are superior to spirits, and are called *Parzuphim*, *Persons*, to denote that they have a substantial existence. The inhabitants of the second world are called *Thrones*, on account of the dominion which they possess over the various orders of *Angels*, which inhabit the third world. The fourth, or material world, is the region of evil spirits, called *Klippoth*, the dregs of emanation. These are the authors of the evil which is found in the material world; but they are continually aspiring towards the Sephiræ, and will, in the great revolution of nature, return into the inexhaustible fountain of Deity. Spirits of all orders have a material vehicle, less pure and subtle, in proportion to their distance from En-soph; and this vehicle is of the nature of the world next below that to which they belong. Metraton is the prince of Jezirah, or the angelic world, in which there are ten distinct orders; Sandalphon, of Asiah, or the material world: these, together with the hosts over which they preside, animate aerial vehicles, capable of impression from corporeal objects, and in different ways requiring renovation.

The human soul, proceeding by emanation from the Deity, is an incorporeal substance, of the same nature with the Divine intellect. Being united to the body, one complex nature is produced, endued with reason and capable of action. The human soul consists of four parts, *Nephesh*, or the principle of vitality; *Ruach*, or the principle of motion; *Neschamah*, or the power of intelligence; and *Jechidah*, a Divine principle, by means of which it contemplates superior natures, and even ascends to the En-sophic world. All souls were produced at once, and pre-existed in Adam. Every human soul has two guardian angels, produced by emanation, at the time of the production of souls. The mind of man is united to the Divine

¹⁵ Carbo ignis divinæ.

Mind, as the radius of a circle to its centre. The souls of good men ascend above the mansion of the angels, and are delighted with the vision of the first light, which illuminates all the worlds.

The universe continues to exist by the Divine energy of emanation. Whilst this energy is exerted, different forms and orders of beings remain: when it is withheld, all the streams of existence return into their fountain. The Ensoph, or Deity, contains all things within himself; and there is always the same quantity of existence, either in a created or an uncreated state. When it is in an uncreated state, God is all; when worlds are created, the Deity is unfolded, or evolved, by various degrees of emanation, which constitute the several forms and orders of created nature.¹⁶

Such is the general outline of the Cabbalistic philosophy, as far as we are able to discover it through the thick cloud of words by which it is concealed; and we shall be readily excused from entering into any further detail of so fanciful and mystical a system.

It is impossible to review the mass of conjectures and fictions, called the Jewish Cabbala, without perceiving that it could not be derived from the pure source of Divine revelation; or to compare the Cabbalistic doctrine with the Oriental and Egyptian philosophy, without discovering that they are the same system. The Cabbalistic notion of Deity as a pure intellectual fire, and of the production of nature as an emanation from this fountain, was taught, as we have already seen, in all the Eastern nations, particularly the Chaldean and Persian. Change the names, and for Mithras substitute Ensoph; for Oromasdes, Adam Kadman; and for Arimanius, Klippoth: and then compare the dogmas advanced concerning each, and it will be sufficiently evident from what source the Jews derived their Cabbala. The Gnostic doctrine of Æons subsisting in the Plenitude of the Divine Nature, which sprang from the same stock, is perfectly similar to that of the Cabbalistic Sephiræ: both appear to have been known to Philo. The Alexandrian philosophers of the Eclectic sect adopt-

¹⁶ Lorrinæ lib. Druschim. et Iriræ Porta Cœlor. ed. a Knorrio in Cabb. Denud. Menassch B. Israel de Creat. p. 27. Moses Corduer. Pard. Rimmonim. tr. iv. p. 23.

ed the same notions, and pursued them into a variety of extravagant and absurd fancies, in many particulars nearly resembling those of the Jewish school. The common tenets, in which the Oriental, the Alexandrian, and the Cabbalistic philosophers were agreed, may be thus briefly stated.

All things are derived, by emanation, from one principle. This principle is God. From him a substantial power immediately proceeds, which is the image of God, and the source of all subsequent emanations. This second principle sends forth, by the energy of emanation, other natures, which are more or less perfect, according to their different degrees of distance, in the scale of emanation, from the first source of existence, and which constitute different worlds, or orders of being, all united to the eternal power from which they proceed. Matter is nothing more than the most remote effect of the emanative energy of the Deity. The material world receives its form from the immediate agency of powers far beneath the First Source of Being. Evil is the necessary effect of the imperfection of matter. Human souls are distant emanations from the Deity; and, after they are liberated from their material vehicles, will return, through various stages of purification, to the fountain whence they first proceeded.

On the whole, the similarity, or rather the coincidence, of the Cabbalistic, Alexandrian, and Oriental philosophy, leaves us little room to hesitate in pronouncing the latter the parent of the two former. With respect to the Cabbalistic system in particular, it cannot be difficult, after the survey we have taken of its leading tenets, to form a judgment of its merit. It is unquestionably a fanatical kind of philosophy, which originates in defect of judgment, and eccentricity of imagination, and which tends to produce a wild and pernicious enthusiasm. The Cabbalistic system can by no means be reconciled with just ideas of the Divine Nature; since, in supposing all things to flow from God, it makes all beings not only dependent upon him, but a part of his essence. In this system, all spiritual and even material substances are so intimately united with their origin, that they do not differ from it in their nature, but merely in their mode of existence; the universe is an evolution of the Divine essence, and is, in fact, God. To this we must add, that the idea, which this

system affords, of the mode of Divine operation, by an expansion or retraction of his essence, is too gross to be applied to the first intelligent cause of all things. Nothing can be more visionary, than the fundamental hypothesis, that God is an infinite light, which has withdrawn itself from a portion of infinite space, in order to unfold itself in sundry emanations, which constitute the universe; nor can any thing be more fanciful than the numerous fictions which fill up the system. Its tendency to encourage fanaticism cannot be doubted. The first principle of this philosophy is the ground upon which the whole structure of enthusiasm is erected. From the notion that all things emanate from God, and will flow back to him, it naturally follows, that it is the great end of philosophy to prepare the human mind for its return to its source, when it will be absorbed in the Divine Plenitude from which it flowed; a doctrine which is the very soul of enthusiasm, both theological and philosophical.

But it is high time that we retreat out of this fairy land, where we should not have remained so long, had it not been necessary to ascertain distinctly the place of the Jewish Cabbala in the history of philosophy, in order to discover its connexion with preceding, and its influence upon contemporary or subsequent, systems: for it must be confessed, that the history of this system is chiefly valuable, as it furnishes an example of the folly of permitting reason, in its search after truth, to follow the wild reveries of an unbridled imagination.¹⁷

¹⁷ Vidend. Jo. A. Lent. Theol. Jud. Reimann. Hist. Theol. Jud. Budd. Int. Ph. Heb. Menasse ben Israel ap. Cromayer. Scrutin. Relig. Diss. Leo Mutin. de Cærem. et Consuetud. Jud. R. Jos. Albo. Fundam. Fid. R. Moses ad Jezirah. Lib. Cosri. Menasse ben Israel de Term. Vitæ, de Creat. &c. Abarbanel de Cap. Fid. Saubert. Palestra Theol. Diss. 1. Windet de Vit. Funct. Statu. Bartoloe. Bibl. Rabb. Hartman. loc. paral. Talm. Cressæ. 1708. Otton. Hist. Doct. Mishn. Reuchlin. de Art. Cabb. Schammii Intr. in Dialect. Cabb. Hackspan. de Cabbala. Carpov. Intr. in Theol. Jud. Pici Apol. Op. Pref. Basil. 1601. Compend. ap. Budd. Intr. § 34. Pestorii Ars Cabb. Bas. 1581. Rittengel de Lib. Jezirah. Amstel. 1675. Knorr's Rosenroth Cabbala denudata. Solisbaci, 1677. Contin. lib. Sohar. Jezirah, &c. Hen. More ad lib. Druschim. Wachter. Spinozizm. in Jud. Ejusd. Elucidarium Cabb. Rom. 1706. Mayer. de Trinit. Harder. 1712. Burgonovo select. Cabb. Dogm. Basnage. Eisenmenger. Wolf. Burnet. Arch. c. 7.

BOOK V.

OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE SARACENS.

CHAP. I.

OF THE ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF PHILOSOPHY AMONG THE SARACENS, OR ARABIANS.

AT the period when ignorance and barbarism prevailed through every part of the Roman empire, philosophy found an asylum among the Saracens, or Arabians; a people who, for several centuries after the appearance of Mahomet, were scarcely less celebrated in their literary and philosophical, than in their civil and military character. Before we proceed to describe the state of philosophy in the Christian world, from the birth of Christ to the revival of letters, we must, therefore, briefly relate the history, and delineate the features, of the Arabian or Saracenic philosophy.

Concerning the ancient state of philosophy in Arabia, we have already seen, that little is known. The Arabian writers, as far as we are acquainted with them, leave the philosophical and literary history of their country, prior to the time of Mahomet, in almost total obscurity. Abulfarius, one of the principal Arabian annalists, confesses,¹ that there are no certain records of the ancient Arabian nations, nor any means of investigating their history. Of this deficiency it is wholly unnecessary to search for any other cause, than the barbarism which at that time prevailed almost universally through this country. The Arabian writers themselves oppose the state of Islamism to the state of ignorance which preceded.² Ebn Chalikan,³ an

¹ Dynast. ix. p. 100.

² *Ib.* p. 101.

³ Ap. Pococke Specimen Hist. Arab. p. 153.

Arabian historian, mentions it as an acknowledged fact, that the first inventor of Arabic writing was Moramer, an Arabian, who lived not long before the time of Mahomet; and relates,⁴ that at the time when the Koran was published, there was not a single person to be found in the whole district of Yamen, who could write or read Arabic. The Jews and Christians who resided in Medina were, for their learning, distinguished by the appellation of "The People of the Book," whilst the Arabians were almost universally illiterate. Mahomet himself was wholly destitute of learning. The Arabians themselves call him, "The illiterate Prophet;" and boast, that God chose out of the unlearned the messenger whom he sent to the unlearned.⁵ It is no wonder, therefore, that this prophet, in framing his new religion, found it necessary to call in assistance from the Jews and Christians. He could not have accomplished his great design without the help of Warakan, the kinsman of his wife Chadijia, who had been conversant with the Jews and Christians, and could write Hebrew as well as Arabic.⁶

The appearance of Mahomet, and the promulgation of his religion, in themselves contributed nothing towards the progress of knowledge and philosophy. This impostor thought it necessary to keep his followers as ignorant as himself. That he might, at one stroke, cut off impertinent contradiction, he issued an edict, which made the study of the liberal sciences and arts a capital offence. At the same time, to captivate the imaginations of his ignorant followers, and hereby establish his authority, he sent forth in separate portions, a sacred book, to which he gave the name of the Koran, containing the doctrines and precepts of his religion. This book, which was chiefly a compilation, sufficiently injudicious and incoherent, from the books of the Nestorian Christians and of the Jews then resident in Arabia, and from the ancient superstitions of the Arabians, long continued the only object of study among the Mahometans. Their reverence for this holy book, the leaves of which, they were taught to believe,

⁴ Ap. Pococke Specimen Hist. Arab. l. c.

⁵ Pococke, ib. p. 156.

⁶ Elmacini Hist. Saracen. l. i. c. 1. p. 10.

were communicated to the prophet by an angel from heaven, long superseded every philosophical and literary pursuit. Imagining that the Koran contained every thing necessary, or useful to be known, whatever was contrary to its dogmas was immediately condemned as erroneous; and whatever was not to be found in this sacred volume was dismissed as superfluous.⁷ Deterred by the fear of punishment from examining the foundation of their law, or opening their minds to the light of philosophy, the followers of

⁷ This was the principle upon which the caliph Omar consigned the Alexandrian libraries to the flames. Abulfaragius relates,* that when Alexandria was taken by Amrus, the Mahometan commander, Philoponus requested that he might be allowed to rescue the philosophical books in the royal libraries from destruction. Amrus wrote to Omar, informing him of the request of Philoponus; to which Omar replied: "As to the books you mention, if they accord with the book of God, there is without them in that book all that is sufficient; but if there be any thing in them repugnant to that book, we have no need of them; order them therefore to be all destroyed." Amrus upon this gave orders that they should be dispersed through the baths of Alexandria, and burned in heating them.† After this manner, in the space of six months, they were all consumed. The historian adds, "Hear what was done, and wonder!"

The authenticity of this story has lately been called in question by Mr. Gibbon, who thinks the report of a solitary stranger, who wrote at the end of six hundred years, on the confines of Media, over-balanced by the silence of two annalists of a more early date, both Christians, both natives of Egypt, and the most ancient of whom, the patriarch Eutychius, has amply described the conquest of Alexandria. But the positive evidence of an historian, of such unquestionable credit as Abulfaragius, cannot be set aside by an argument merely negative. Mr. G. also pleads the repugnancy of the rigid sentence of Omar to the precept of the Mahometan casuists, which declared it unlawful to burn the religious books of Jews and Christians, and allowed the use of profane writers; but he seems himself aware of the weakness of this argument; for he imputes the protection granted to the religious books of Jews and Christians to reverence for the name of God, and acknowledges, that "a more destructive zeal may perhaps be attributed to the first successors of Mahomet." His references to A. Gellius (Noct. Att. l. vi. c. 17.), Amm. Marcellinus (l. xii. c. 16.), and Orosius (l. vi. c. 15.), as speaking of the Alexandrian libraries in the *past* tense, are foreign from the purpose; for these writers only refer to the destruction of books at Alexandria in the time of Julius Cæsar; after which, large libraries must have been continually accumulating, during the long period in which the schools of philosophy flourished in that city.

* Dyn. p. 114. Oxon. 1663. † That is, probably, in kindling the fires.

Mahomet quietly submitted their reason to the yoke of authority. Add to this, that the violent spirit and military character of Islamism was in itself inimical to philosophy and science. A prophet, who propagated and established his religion, not by reasoning, but the sword, would keep his followers too busily employed in war and conquest, to leave them leisure for literary pursuits.⁸

From these causes, philosophy, during the first ages of Mahometanism, found no protection in Arabia. But, in this period of thick darkness, when, among Christians, true science was lost in the thorny controversies of theology; and when, among the Saracens, it was trampled under foot by ignorance and bigotry; after the extinction of the dynasty of the Ommiadæ, who trod in the footsteps of Mahomet,⁹ the accession of the family of the Abbasidæ, or Hashemidæ, to the caliphate (which happened in the one hundred and twenty-seventh year of the Hegira, or the seven hundred and forty-ninth of the Christian era) proved the dawning of philosophy in Arabia.¹⁰

The first princes of the Abbasidean dynasty were, indeed, chiefly occupied in establishing and extending the new empire. But they were in one respect wiser than their predecessors; they paid little regard to the absurd edict, by which arts and sciences had been banished out of the realms of Mahomet. The second prince of this family, Abug Iaafer Al-Mansor, possessed dispositions and talents which inclined and enabled him to favour the progress of knowledge among his subjects. His gentle temper contributed towards subduing the ferocity of the times; his natural good sense taught him the value of learning, and qualified him to detect the erroneous maxims upon which the Mahometan system of policy was founded; and his liberal and candid spirit rendered him easy of access to learned men of all countries and professions.¹¹

The first circumstance which seems to have led to the

⁸ Abulfar. Dyn. p. 99. 104. 110. Pococke, l. c. p. 121. 136. 162. 165. 166. Tophail cp. de Hai Ebn Yockdan. p. 14. R. Jehudæ lib. Cosri, p. 1. § 5. Elmacin. Hist. Sar. l. i. c. 1.

⁹ Elmacin. Hist. Sar. l. i. c. 7.

¹⁰ Ib. l. ii. c. 1. Abulf. Dyn. ix. p. 123.

¹¹ Elmacin. Hist. Saracen. l. ii. c. 3. Abulfar. ib. p. 129.

introduction of science and philosophy into the courts of the caliphs, was the necessity, which the ignorant Arabians were under, of calling in the more enlightened Christians, who resided at this time in great numbers at Bagdat, the seat of the empire, and in other parts of the Mahometan dominions, to superintend and regulate the practice of the medical art. Al-Mansor had two Christian physicians in his court, who, on account of their skill in medicine, stood high in his esteem, and who, being men of letters, inspired the prince with the love of literature and philosophy. The caliph himself, under their direction, studied astronomy. He paid great respect to learned men, and offered liberal rewards to those who would undertake the translation of the Greek writers in philosophy, astronomy, mathematics, medicine, and other branches of learning. These exertions on the part of the prince were not without their effect on his subjects. But, the Arabians not understanding Greek, the translation of ancient authors was entirely executed by the Christians then resident in Bagdat; and, because the vernacular tongue of that city was the Syriac, these versions were made in that language; from which many of them were afterwards translated into Arabic. Hence most of the Arabic translations of the ancients, still extant, are exceedingly defective.¹²

After Al-Mansor, the fifth caliph of the Abbasidean dynasty, Haron Rashid,¹³ who assumed the government in the year 786, cherished the rising plants of science and literature. He was a liberal patron of genius and learning of every kind, but was particularly fond of those who possessed poetical talents. He never travelled without a retinue of learned men. Rashid was at first, through bigotry, disinclined to encourage the learned Christians; but their superior skill in medicine soon introduced them to his favour. It happened, that a young Egyptian female, of great beauty, who was a favourite with the caliph, was attacked with a severe illness, which baffled the skill of the Arabian physicians: upon which Rashid sent a messenger into Egypt, to invite Balatian, the patriarch of Alexandria, eminent for his skill in medicine, to visit Bagdat.

¹² Abulf. Dyn. ix. p. 148. 94. 99. Fabric. Bib. Gr. v. i. p. 814. Friend. Hist. Med. p. ii. p. 6.

¹³ Elmacin. l. ii. c. 6.

Salatian obeyed the summons, and soon accomplished the cure of his fair patient. For this acceptable service he received from the caliph ample rewards; and he obtained a mandate in favour of his Christian brethren in Egypt, for the restoration of certain lands, of which they had been unjustly deprived. Afterwards, when Rashid himself was seized with an apoplexy, a Christian physician, in opposition to the judgment of the Arabian practitioners, bled him, and hereby effected his recovery. These and other fortunate circumstances established the credit of the Christian physicians in the court of Bagdat, and enabled them, with the knowledge of medicine, to introduce an acquaintance with other branches of science among the Arabians.¹⁴

The light of philosophy, which, at first, under Al-Mansor, and afterwards under Rashid, dawned upon Arabia, in the caliphate of the younger son of Rashid, *Abul-Abbas Al-Mamon*,¹⁵ shone forth in meridian splendour. Endued with a good understanding and a liberal spirit, this prince soon outstripped his predecessors in the zealous and successful patronage of science and learning. Whilst Rashid was living, he nominated his eldest son, Al-Mamin, to the inheritance of the caliphate, and gave Al-Mamon the government of Chorazan. Here this excellent youth applied himself to study under learned men, whom he collected from various countries. These he formed into a society, or college, appointing for their president John Messue, of Damascus, a Christian physician, who had resided at Bagdat, and with whose abilities and merit he had long been acquainted. Rashid, when he was informed of this appointment, expressed great displeasure that his son should confer so distinguished an honour upon a Christian. Al-Mamon, in his own justification, replied, "I have made choice of Messue, not as a teacher of religion, but as an able preceptor in useful sciences and arts; and my father well knows, that the most learned men, and the most skilful artists, in his dominions, are Jews and Christians." After the death of Rashid, and the short and disgraceful reign of

¹⁴ Eutychii Alex. Origin. Eccl. Al. (ed. Selden. Lond. 1642.) t. ii. p. 407. Abulf. Dyn. ix. p. 114. Fab. Bib. Gr. v. xiii. p. 17. Elmacin. l. ii. c. 6.

¹⁵ Elmacin. l. ii. c. 8. Abulfar. Dyn. ix. p. 160. Leo. Afric. de Vir. Arab. c. 1. Zonaras, l. iii. Pococke, p. 168.

his elder son, Al-Mamin, the caliphate passed into the hands of the enlightened and liberal Al-Mamon, who soon made Bagdat the first seat of the muses.¹⁶

Having collected many valuable books, written in the Greek, Persian, Chaldean, and Egyptian or Coptic languages, Al-Mamon employed learned men to translate them into Arabic.¹⁷ Among the Greek writings, which now appeared in an Arabic dress, were the works of Galen and Aristotle; and from this epocha we are to date the commencement of the long reign of the Aristotelian philosophy among the Arabians. The caliph appointed Messue to superintend these translations. Under his auspices this learned preceptor also instituted and conducted a school, in which he instructed a numerous train of pupils in philosophy, and other branches of learning. Among other disciples of Messue was Honain, an eminent Christian physician, who translated the Elements of Euclid, the Almagestus of Ptolemy, and the writings of Hippocrates and other Greek authors. He may justly be ranked among the fathers of the Arabian philosophy.¹⁸ *

Al-Mamon was not only an illustrious patron of the learned, but was himself no mean adept in several branches of science. He was well acquainted with astronomy, mathematics, and philosophy; and was frequently present at

* Leo Afr. l. c.

† Renaudot. de Vers. Arab. et Syr. ap. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. i. p. 814.

* Leo Afr. l. c.

* Of Honain, Abulfaragius relates † the following anecdote:—One day, after some medical conversation, the caliph said to him, “Teach me a prescription by which I may take off any enemy I please, without being discovered.” Honain declining to give an answer, and pleading ignorance, was imprisoned. Being brought again, after a year’s interval, into the caliph’s presence, and still persisting in ignorance, though threatened with death, the caliph smiled upon him, and said, “Be of good cheer, we were only trying thee, that we might have the greater confidence in thee.” As Honain upon this bowed down and kissed the earth, “What hindered thee,” says the caliph, “from granting our request, when thou sawest us appear so ready to perform what we had threatened?” “Two things,” replied Honain, “my Religion, and my Profession. My religion, which commands me to do good to my enemies; and my profession, which was purely instituted for the benefit of mankind.” “Two noble laws!” said the caliph; and immediately presented him, according to the Eastern usage, with rich garments, and a sum of money.

† Abulf. p. 172. ap. Harris Philol. Inq. p. 378.

the conferences of learned men, entering with great spirit into the subjects of their debates. In the midst of the praise which is due to this caliph, it must, however, be mentioned with regret, that, through an ill-judged partiality for his vernacular tongue, he gave orders that, after the Arabic versions were finished, the original Greek manuscripts should be burned.¹⁹ A similar folly seized the caliphs of Africa: and to this cause we are, doubtless, to ascribe the entire loss of many ancient writings. The diligence, however, with which this caliph cultivated and encouraged learning, cancels in some measure this disgrace, and leaves him entitled to an honourable station among philosophers.²⁰ It was no inconsiderable proof of the great service which Al-Mamon rendered to philosophy, that superstition and barbarism bitterly complained of the encroachments, which, during his reign, were made upon their territories; and that Takiddin,²¹ a bigoted Mahometan, said, that God would assuredly punish Al-mamon for daring to interrupt the devotions of the Mahometans, by introducing philosophy among them. No wonder that the zealous advocates for the religion of Mahomet began to be alarmed, when they saw that the wretched poverty of their Koran was discovered, and the gross absurdity of their superstitions exposed, by the light of philosophy. During the reign of Al-Mamon, the love of science became so prevalent among the Saracens, that scarcely a mosque was erected without annexing to it a school, in which philosophy and literature were to be taught.

After the death of Al-Mamon, which happened in the year 833, philosophy continued its progress among the Saracens. Some of his successors were, indeed, too busily occupied in war, or of too indolent a disposition, to pay much attention to science; but there were others, who fostered the rising plant, and took much pains to bring it to maturity. Among these, the prince, whose name is most memorable, is Aaron Wacic, or Wathek, who was advanced to the caliphate in the year 841.²² He liberally encouraged learned men of every class, particularly mathematicians and astronomers. His reign produced the celebrated as-

¹⁹ Leo Afr. l. c.

²⁰ Abulf. ap. Pococke, p. 160.

²¹ Ib. p. 166. Bayle.

²² Elmacin. l. ii. c. 10, 11.

astronomer Al-Hasan, who wrote a treatise on the Lunar Irregularities.²³ The schools, which in the times of Rashid and Al-Mamon had been instituted under the direction of John of Damascus, Honain, and others, long flourished, and sent forth, in great abundance, philosophers and learned men, several of whom will be distinctly noticed in the sequel.

Science continued to enjoy the protection of the Saracen princes, after the empire was divided into several caliphates, in Asia, Africa, and Europe, and was, by means of their conquests, disseminated through a great part of the world. In the tenth century, under the caliph Abulfadli Murtadir, and others, who distinguished themselves as patrons of learning, poetry and philosophy were equally encouraged; and they continued to flourish among the Saracens till the thirteenth century, when, the power of the Saracens yielding to that of the Turks, learning fled for refuge to the Persians, Tartars, and Scythians.²⁴

From the beginning of the ninth to the end of the thirteenth century, eminent schools of learning flourished in the Saracen empire, among which the principal were those at Bagdat, Bassora, and Bochara, in the East; at Alexandria and Cairo, in Egypt; at Morocco and Fez, in Barbary; and in several cities of Spain. The college at Bagdat was so flourishing at the beginning of the twelfth century, that it contained six thousand men, including masters and scholars. In that of Bassora, the members of the society formed a sect for correcting the corruptions which had crept into Islamism, which they acknowledged could not be purged away without the aid of philosophy. At Cairo, where, about the year 1000, twenty schools were instituted, the philosophy of Aristotle was taught to great crowds of pupils from all parts of the world. The schools of Africa and Spain were distinguished by the names of Averroës, Avicenna, and other eminent philosophers, at a period when barbarism universally prevailed among the Western Christians. Many of these colleges were large and magnificent buildings, liberally endowed, furnished with valuable libraries,

²³ Abulf. p. 258.

²⁴ Abulf. p. 179. 200. 208. 217. Elmacin. l. ii. c. 9, 16, l. iii. c. 1. 4, 8.

and adorned with learned professors of languages, mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy.²⁵

It was a necessary consequence of the increase of knowledge among the Saracens, that the absurdities of the superstition, which their illiterate prophet had established, were perceived; and it became necessary, in order to defend it against the reasonings, and the ridicule, of Christians, Jews, and philosophers, to give such an explanation of the Koran, as might make it appear not wholly inconsistent with reason and common sense. Hence arose a variety of forced interpretations of the law, each of which had its advocates, and became the foundation of a distinct sect. Soon after the time when philosophy began to be studied among the Saracens, the followers of Mahomet were divided into six sects, and these were afterwards sub-divided into seventy-three. The rise of these sects was unquestionably owing to the advancement of knowledge. When philosophy had so far prevailed over superstition, that the more enlightened professors of the Mahometan religion began to be themselves sensible of its absurdities, they endeavoured to conceal them under the veil of figurative interpretation.²⁶ In order to accommodate the established system, which was guarded by the sanction of penal laws, to their philosophical conceptions, they blended the abstract speculations of the schools with the gross and vulgar conceptions of the Koran. They made use of the subtleties of the Aristotelian philosophy, in the defective state in which it had come into their hands, to assist them in improving upon the literal meaning of their sacred books, and thus gave a new, and for the most part a metaphysical, turn to the religion and law of Mahomet. One of their own writers confesses this to have been the origin of their religious sects. "At the beginning of Mahometanism," says Al-Gazel,²⁷ "the art of reasoning upon religious subjects was unknown; but afterwards, when sects began to arise, and ancient articles of belief to be called in question,

²⁵ Abulf. p. 217. 230. Benj. Tudelensis Itin. p. 121. Leo Afr. Hist. Afr. l. viii. 267. 272. Elmacin. l. i. c. 13. Toletan. Hist. Ar. c. 9. 12.

²⁶ Elmacin. l. i. c. 5. l. ii. c. 16. l. iii. c. 6. 8. Pococke, p. 209. Proleg. ad Koran. § 8. Maimonid. Mor. Nebhoch. l. iii. c. 16.

²⁷ Apud Pococke, p. 196.

it was found necessary to make use of the aid of logic in defending the truth against the bold attacks of innovators."

To this new kind of philosophical theology, the Arabians gave the distinct name of *Al-Calam*, the Wisdom of Words,²⁸ or the Science of Reason, and those who professed it were called Rationalists. Maimonides, who himself long resided among the Arabians, and accurately examined into the history of their sects, asserts,²⁹ that these Rational Theologians, among the Mahometans, were chiefly indebted, for the weapons with which they defended Islamism against philosophy, to the Greek philosophers themselves; and that they borrowed this method of defence from the Christians, to establish the articles of their faith by reconciling them with the dogmas of philosophy. This rational Islamism was first reduced into a systematic form by Al-mawakif,³⁰ an Arabian, who called his system, the science by means of which any one might be qualified to resolve doubts concerning religion, and to maintain the truth of its doctrines against innovators. Philosophy was, in this sect, forced into the service of superstition; whence it happened, as might naturally be expected, that these Rationalists employed the distinctions and subtleties of the Aristotelian school, not for the discovery of truth, but for the purpose of concealing the real dogmas of the Koran, which could not have been fairly explained without manifest detriment to the cause of Islamism. X

Of the manner in which the dialectic sects of Mahometans trifled, Maimonides furnishes the following example.³¹ They chose rather to call God the first agent, or efficient, than the first cause; for they argued, that if they called God a cause, this would necessarily suppose an effect; and it would follow, that God being from eternity a necessary cause, the effect produced, or the universe, must also have been eternal; but, if they represented the Deity as an agent or efficient, the necessary existence of the effect would not follow; since the efficient not only must be prior to the production, but might exist long before the actual exertion of power, by which it is produced.³² Y

²⁸ Sharestan apud Pococke, p. 194.

²⁹ Hottinger Biblioth. Orient. c. ii. p. 187.

³⁰ Conf. Hottinger, l. c. c. ii. p. 188. 194.

³¹ Mor. Nebh. p. i. c. 71.

³² L. c. p. i. c. 69.

This specimen of the method of reasoning, which prevailed among the Mahometan Rationalists, may serve to illustrate and confirm the following character given of this sect by another learned Jew: "The sect of the Rationalists," says R. Aben Tibbon,³² "is composed of certain philosophical sciolists, who judge of things, not according to truth and nature, but according to their own imaginations, and who confound men by a multiplicity of specious words without meaning; whence their science is called, The Wisdom of Words." The design, which was formed by this sect, of illustrating and defending the Koran by logical and metaphysical disquisitions, was highly displeasing to many zealous Musselmén, who wished to retain the simplicity and ignorance of their founder, rather than to corrupt his sacred book by explaining it according to the rules of a philosophical system wholly unknown to the prophet. So vehement was the popular aversion to this sect, that it was said by Al-Shafi,³⁴ "Whoever devotes himself to the Wisdom of Words ought to be impaled, and carried through all the tribes of Musselmén, the public crier every where proclaiming, 'This is the reward of the man who has forsaken the Koran, and the sacred traditions, to follow Al-Calam.'" This philosophical theology of the Arabians was the nurse at least, if not the parent, of the scholastic philosophy, which, from the tenth century, confounded and distracted the world with its obscure subtleties, and barren disputations.

Among the Saracens, in Asia, Mauritania, and Spain, we find a long catalogue of writers on metaphysics, physics, logic, ethics, politics, mathematics, and astronomy. From these we shall select such names as are most deserving of attention in the history of philosophy.

A distinguished place among the Arabian philosophers is due to *Jacobus Al-Kendi*,³⁵ of Bassora. His father was prefect of Cufa under Muhamed Mohdi and Rashid; whence it appears, that Al-Kendi flourished in the caliphate of Al-Mamon, that is, at the beginning of the ninth century. He devoted himself to learning and philosophy in the school of Bassora, and attained such distinction

³² In Lib. Morch..

³⁴ Pecaock, c. 166. Bayle. Takkiddin.

³⁵ Abulfar. Dyn. ix. p. 213. Bayle. Pecaock, p. 365. Laskomacher. Diss. de Alkend.

among his contemporaries, that he was called, by way of eminence, *The Philosopher*. After the manner of the age, he yielded implicit submission to the authority of Aristotle, and was chiefly occupied in interpreting and illustrating his writings. He did not, however, confine himself to these studies; for we find his name mentioned among the mathematicians and astronomers of the times; and his medical writings, which are still extant, prove that he made no inconsiderable figure among the Arabian physicians. *Abulfarius*, speaking of *Al-Kendi*,³⁸ relates a memorable instance of his moderation towards a malicious adversary. Whilst this philosopher was visiting the schools of Bagdat, which was at this time the chief resort of the learned, his attempts to promote the study of philosophy, and to reconcile the doctrines of Islamism with the principles of reason, gave great offence to one of the interpreters of the *Koran*, who, doubtless, began to be afraid lest the increase of knowledge should expose the absurdity of the vulgar superstitions. This bigot publicly expressed the most vehement indignation against *Al-Kendi*, and accused him of impiety and heresy. *Al-Kendi*, however, instead of restraining the fury of his persecutor by violence, as through his interest with the caliph he might easily have done, generously adopted the more gentle method of attempting to subdue his malignity by enlightening his understanding. Having detected the design which this *Abu Maashar* (that was the zealot's name) had formed upon his life, he employed against him no other weapons than the monitions and precepts of philosophy. Well knowing the power of wisdom to meliorate the temper, he found means to engage a preceptor to instruct him, first in mathematics, and afterwards in philosophy. The consequence was, that the man who had, not long before, inveighed with savage ferocity against *Al-Kendi*, soon became sensible of his folly, and offered himself as a pupil to the philosopher whom he had persecuted. *Al-Kendi* received him with the most meritorious condescension, and his convert became an ornament to his school. In fine, on account of his virtues, no less than his learning, *Al-Kendi* is entitled to an honourable rank among philosophers.

³⁸ L. c. p. 272. 178. Zachut. in Juchasin. p. 111.

Another Arabian, who must be mentioned among the teachers of philosophy and mathematics, is *Thabet Ebn Korra*, who was of the ancient sect of the Zabai, and wrote a summary of their doctrine. He acquired reputation as a mathematician, both in geometry and algebra, and left behind him several mathematical works; he flourished in the tenth century.³⁷

One of the most celebrated philosophers of the school of Bagdat was *Al-Farabi*, or more properly *Abu Nasr*, a native of Balch Farab,³⁸ who flourished in the tenth century. He was born of wealthy parents, but, preferring the pursuits of philosophy to those of riches, he devoted himself to study at Bagdat, where he made such proficiency in learning, that he became one of the most eminent philosophers of his age. He studied mathematics and medicine, but chiefly excelled in logic. His learning and abilities were universally admired, and great men and princes were emulous to load him with honours and rewards. But *Al-Farabi* refused every offer of this kind; and, either through his love of philosophy, or perhaps through a natural gloominess of temper, gave himself up to solitude and an abstemious life. He constantly slept, even during winter, upon straw; his countenance was always sorrowful, and he found no consolation in any thing but philosophy. The cast of his mind led him to dread all intercourse with the world as destructive of innocence, and to lament the imperfection and vanity of human life. He employed his time in study, and read the writings of Aristotle with unwearied attention. He wrote sixty distinct treatises on different parts of the Aristotelian philosophy, which were read and admired, not only among the Arabians, but also among the Jews, who began about this time to adopt the Aristotelian mode of philosophising. Many of his books were translated from Arabic into Hebrew. Logic, metaphysics, and physics, were the subjects on which he chiefly treated. Among his physical writings are mentioned treatises on optics and astronomy.³⁹

³⁷ Abulf. Dyn. ix. p. 164. Pococke, p. 377. Fabric. Bibl. Gr. v. li. p. 564.

³⁸ A town in Asia Minor, afterwards called by the Turks Otrar.

³⁹ Leo Afric. de Vir. Illustr. Arab. c. 5. Abulfar. Dyn. ix. p. 208.

As a philosophical theologian, *Al-Ashari*, or *Basari*, obtained high renown. He applied an extensive knowledge of the Peripatetic philosophy to the explanation of the Islamic law, and founded a new sect among the Mahometan divines, who were from him called the Asharites. His subtle reasonings on theology, particularly on the essence and attributes of God, and on the concurrence of Divine Agency with human actions, rendered him universally famous. His sect became exceedingly popular, and acquired such authority, that all others were deemed heretical: his writings were read and explained in the schools; and a summary of his doctrine was committed to memory by children. *Al-Ashari* died at Basara in Arabia Felix, in the year 942.*

Among the professors of mathematical and physical science, who at this time adorned the school of Bagdat, one of the most celebrated was *Abul Husein Esophi*. He was so eminent an astronomer, that it was said of him, that he understood the heavens better than the great geographer, Ptolemy, understood the earth. It is asserted that he was the first who described a celestial planisphere. This philosopher died about the middle of the tenth century.⁴¹

In medicine and philosophy, a high degree of reputation was obtained by *Al-Rasi*, called also Abubeker and *Al-Mansor*, a native of Rai, in Persia. After having been in his youth employed in merchandize, upon the death of his father he engaged, at thirty years of age, in the study of the medical art; at the same time availing himself of the opportunities which the school of Bagdat, in which he studied, afforded for the pursuit of other branches of knowledge. By a long course of study, and by the experience which he acquired from superintending an hospital, he became so bold and successful in the practice of medicine, that he was called the Experimenter, and the Arabian Galen. At the invitation of *Al-Mansor*, king of Corduba, he removed into Spain, where, under the patronage of that prince, he lived in wealth and splendour. He wrote a sum-

Poocke, p. 372. Gab. Sionit. de Mor. Orient. p. 16. Fabr. v. xiii. p. 265. Weidler. Hist. Astr. c. 8.

* Leo Af. c. 2. Herbolat. Bibl. Or. p. 133. 261. Maimon. Mor. Nebh. p. iii. c. 16.

⁴¹ Leo Af. c. 3.

mary of medicine, which he dedicated to his patron, and which has, from this circumstance, taken the title of *Al-Mansor*. Al-Rasi wrote many valuable treatises in medicine and chemistry. In philosophy, among other works, he left a commentary on the sublimer parts of metaphysics. This piece, with most of his other writings, has been translated from Arabic into Hebrew and Latin. He died at Corduba, about the year 986.*

No small degree of celebrity is annexed to the name of the physician *Avicenna*, or *Ibn-Sina*, born at Bochara in the year 978. His first preceptor was Abu-Abdalla, a philosopher whom his father engaged to instruct him in his own house: concerning whom Avicenna says, that he taught him the terms of logic, but was unacquainted with the nature of the art. Before he arrived at his eighteenth year, Avicenna, more, as it seems, through his own industry than by the assistance of preceptors, became well read in languages, in the Islamitic law, and in the sciences. In order, however, to render himself a more perfect master of the sublime doctrines of philosophy, and the subtle questions of dialectics, he became a student in the school of Bagdat. Here he prosecuted his studies with indefatigable industry, but at the same time with a fanatical spirit scarcely consistent with manly sense and sound judgment. When he was perplexed with any logical question, or could not discover a proper middle term for a syllogism, he used to repair to the mosque, and poured out prayers for Divine illumination; after which he fancied, that the arguments and proofs he had sought were communicated to him in his sleep.

As was usual among the philosophers of Bagdat, Avicenna united with the study of philosophy the practice of medicine; and he soon acquired such a degree of reputation, that the caliph consulted him, with respect to his son, in a case which perplexed the physicians of the court. His prescription succeeded; and the success obtained him admission to the court, and access to the library of the prince. From this time he continued to prosecute his studies with diligence, and to practise medicine with great

* Leo Af. c. 5. Abulfar. D. lx. p. 208. Fab. Bib. Gr. v. xiii. p. 46. Herbelot. p. 18. Al-Rasi Op. ed. Basil. 1644.

applause. During this tide of prosperity, Avicenna had no small degree of influence in public affairs, and rapidly increased his possessions. An unfortunate circumstance, however, suddenly turned the current of his fortune, and removed him from the court to a prison. The sultan Jarsoch-bagh proposing to send his nephew as his representative into the native country of Avicenna, the young prince obtained the sultan's permission to take Avicenna with him, as his companion and physician. The sultan was, not long afterwards, informed, that the young prince, with his brother, was meditating a rebellion. Upon this he immediately sent secret orders to Avicenna, to take off the leader of the conspiracy by poison. The philosopher had too much fidelity to his master to fulfil the commission; but, at the same time, through caution or fear, chose to conceal the order from the young prince. But when Avicenna's master became, by some unknown means, acquainted with the sultan's design against his life, he was so highly offended with Avicenna for his dishonest reserve, in not communicating to him so important a circumstance, that he ordered him to be imprisoned. Avicenna endeavoured to justify himself, by pleading, that he had concealed the sultan's order, from the hope of preventing those mischiefs which he foresaw must have arisen from the discovery. The prince, however, suffered him to remain in prison from this time to his death, which he is said to have hastened by incontinence: he died in the fifty-eighth year of his age.⁴³

Philosophy was rather corrupted than improved by Avicenna. Though a superstitious admirer of Aristotle, he seems to have been very imperfectly acquainted with the Peripatetic doctrine. His medicinal works are injudicious compilations from the Greek writers, full of obscurity and error; nor was he more successful in his writings upon logic, metaphysics, or physics. Nevertheless, Avicenna was, for a long time, greatly admired, and much followed, not only in the schools of the Saracens, but in those of the Christians. Hebrew and Latin versions of

⁴³ Leo Afr. c. 7. Abulf. p. 230. Fabric. Bib. Gr. v. xiii. p. 96. Pockocke, p. 362. Herbelot. p. 812. N. Antou. Bib. Vet. Hisp. t. ii. p. 6. Avic. Op. ed. Massæ, Venet. 1608.

his works are still extant; but the translators do not appear to have been sufficiently masters of the Arabic tongue to do justice to their author.⁴⁴

Thograi, a Persian of Ispahan, who was grand vizier to the sultan Malich Mashud, is celebrated for his poetical talents, a specimen of which is given by Pococke; and for a Commentary which he wrote upon the Republic of Plato, a philosopher to whom the Saracens paid little attention. After a strange reverse of fortune, he was put to death, by order of the sultan, in the year 1121.⁴⁵

We must not omit *Al-Gazel*, of Tos, or Tus, in Asia, celebrated, among the Mahometan theologians, for his numerous treatises in defence of the Mahometan religion against the Jews and Christians; particularly for his "Demonstration of Islamism," and his "Treatise on the Unity of God." Nevertheless, he did not escape the reproach of heresy. One of his pieces, which freely censured some of the indulgences of the Islamitic law, found at Bagdat after his decease, was condemned; and it was ordered, that if any copy of this work should be found in any part of the Saracen empire, it should be burned. The title of this book was "The Resurrection of the Law of Science." He also wrote a treatise, "On the Opinions of Philosophers;" and another, entitled, "The Destruction of Philosophers." After living in great splendour as a public preceptor at Bagdat, he distributed his riches among the poor, assumed the habit of a hermit, and retired to Mecca. From Mecca he travelled into Syria and Egypt, and staying some time, first at Cairo, and afterwards at Alexandria, he returned to Bagdat, where he died.⁴⁶

If from Asia we pass over to the Moors in Africa and Europe, we shall, during the period of which we are now treating, meet with several celebrated Arabian philosophers.

Esseriph Essachali, a native of Sicily, was famous for his knowledge of medicine, astrology, and cosmography. When Roger, duke of Apulia and Calabria, having been

⁴⁴ Hottinger. Bib. Or. p. 218. 245. Bartolocc. Bib. Rabb. t. i. p. 6. Voss. de Phil. p. 272. Fabric. Bib. Gr. v. xiii. p. 272. Mercklin. de Script. Med. p. 99.

⁴⁵ Pococke ad. Carm. Thogr. p. 4. ed. Oxon. 1661. Leo Afr. c. 13.

⁴⁶ Pococke, l. c. p. 371. Leo Afr. c. 12. Herbelet. p. 362.

appointed king of Sicily by Pope Anacletus, was besieging the town of Mazzerà, the inhabitants sent this philosopher to Roger, to treat with him concerning terms of surrender. Esseriph, to interest Roger in his favour, presented him with a work upon ancient and modern geography. The king, pleased with the account which the author gave him of the design and plan of his work, ordered it to be translated into Latin. Upon reading the translation, he expressed great surprise, that the Mahometans should be so much better acquainted with these subjects than the Christians, and invited the author to remain in his court. The philosopher refused his request, and withdrew into Mauritania. Roger, however, still continued to admire the book; and when he was asked, why he did not prefer the geography of Ptolemy, a much more learned writer, he answered, "Ptolemy has described only a part of the world, Esseriph the whole." This philosopher died at Cividat, in Africa, in the year 1121.⁴⁷

Among the Spanish Saracens, Avenpace and Avenzoar are celebrated names. *Avenpace*, a Spaniard, wrote a commentary upon Euclid, and philosophical and theological Epistles. He was intimately conversant with the Peripatetic philosophy, and applied it to the illustration of the Islamic system of theology, and to the explanation of the Koran. On this account, he was suspected of heresy, and thrown into prison at Corduba. He flourished about the middle of the twelfth century.⁴⁸ *Avenzoar*, a native of Seville, the seat of the caliphs, deserves notice, chiefly for the improvements which he made in the practice of medicine, and as the preceptor of Averroës. He died in the year 1168.⁴⁹

About the same time flourished *Thophail*, of Seville, famous for his medical skill, and for his knowledge of the Peripatetic philosophy. He was preceptor to Maimonides and Averroës. This philosopher employed the Aristotelian doctrine, as an instrument of enthusiasm, in the elegant tale, still extant, of *Hai Ebn Yockdan*,⁵⁰ a youth

⁴⁷ Pococke, Spec. Hist. Ar. p. 373. Leo Afr. c. 14.

⁴⁸ Leo Afr. c. 16. Abulf. ap. Pococke Specim. p. 365.

⁴⁹ Leo Afr. c. 16. 18. N. Anton. Bib. Hisp. t. ii. p. 232.

⁵⁰ Theophail. Philos. Autodid. cum Versione Lat. a Pococke, Oxon. 1700.

who, having been exposed when an infant upon the sea-coast, was nourished by a hind, and grew up in the woods, without any intercourse with human beings; and who, by the unaided exertion of his powers, attained to the knowledge of things natural and supernatural, and arrived at the felicity of an intuitive intercourse with the Divine Mind. The piece is written with such elegance of language, and vigour of imagination, that, notwithstanding the improbability of the story, it has been universally admired. It exhibits a favourable specimen of Peripatetic philosophy as it was taught among the Saracens; and, at the same time, affords a memorable example of the unnatural alliance, which was now so generally established, between philosophy and fanaticism.⁵¹ Thophail died about the close of the twelfth century.⁵²

Of all the Arabian philosophers and physicians, the most celebrated was **AVERROES**,⁵³ a philosopher whom Christians as well as Arabians esteemed equal, if not superior, to Aristotle himself. Averroës was born about the middle of the twelfth century, of a noble family at Corduba, the capital of the Saracen dominions in Spain. He was early instructed in the Islamitic law, and, after the usual manner of the Arabian schools, united with the study of Mahometan theology that of the Aristotelian philosophy. These studies he pursued under Thophail, and became a follower of the sect of the Asharites. Under Avenzoar he studied the science of medicine, and under Ibnu-Saig he made himself master of the mathematical sciences. Thus qualified, he was chosen, upon his father's demise, to the chief magistracy of Corduba. The fame of his extraordinary erudition and talents soon afterwards reached the caliph Jacob Al-Mansor, king of Mauritania, the third of the Almohadean dynasty, who had built a magnificent school at Morocco;⁵⁴ and that prince appointed him supreme magistrate and priest of Morocco and Mauritania, allowing him

⁵¹ This work was translated into English by S. Hockley, professor of Arabic in Cambridge. Ed. London, 1711. 8vo.

⁵² Leo Afr. c. 17.

⁵³ Leo Afr. c. 20. N. Anton. l. c. t. ii. p. 243. Bayle. Pocccke Spec. p. 385.

⁵⁴ Leo Af. Hist. Afr. l. ii. p. 60.

still to retain his former honours. Having left a temporary substitute at Corduba, he went to Morocco, and remained there till he had appointed, through the kingdom, judges well skilled in the Mahometan law, and settled the whole plan of administration; after which he returned home, and resumed his offices.⁵⁵

This rapid advancement of Averroës brought upon him the envy of his rivals at Corduba; and they conspired to lodge an accusation against him, for an heretical desertion of the true Mahometan faith. For this purpose they engaged several young persons, among their dependants, to apply to him for instruction in philosophy. Averroës, who was easy of access, and always desirous of communicating knowledge, complied with their request, and thus fell into the snare which had been laid for him. His new pupils were very industrious in taking minutes of every tenet, or opinion, advanced by their preceptor, which appeared to contradict the established system of Mahometan theology. These minutes they framed into a charge of heresy, and attested upon oath that they had been fairly taken from his lips. The charge was signed by an hundred witnesses. The caliph listened to the accusation, and punished Averroës, by declaring him heterodox, confiscating his goods, and commanding him for the future to reside among the Jews, who inhabited the precincts of Corduba, where he remained an object of general persecution and obloquy. Even the boys in the streets pelted him with stones, when he went up to the mosque in the city to perform his devotions. His pupil, Maimonides, that he might not be under the necessity of violating the laws of friendship and gratitude, by joining the general cry against Averroës, left Corduba. From this unpleasant situation Averroës at last found means to escape. He fled to Fez; but he had been there only a few days, when he was discovered by the magistrate, and committed to prison. The report of his flight from Corduba was soon carried to the king, who immediately called a council of divines and lawyers, to determine in what manner this heretic should be treated. The members of the council

⁵⁵ Leo Af. de Vir. Ar. p. 280.

were not agreed in opinion. Some strenuously maintained, that a man who held opinions so contrary to the law of the prophet deserved death. Others thought, that much mischief, arising from the dissatisfaction of those among the infidels who were inclined to favour him, might be avoided, by only requiring from the culprit a public penance, and recantation of his errors. The milder opinion prevailed; and Averroës was brought out of prison to the gate of the mosque, and placed upon the upper step, with his head bare, at the time of public prayers, and every one, as he passed into the mosque, was allowed to spit upon his face. At the close of the service, the judge, with his attendants, came to the philosopher, and asked him, whether he repented of his heresies. He acknowledged his penitence, and was dismissed without further punishment. With the permission of the king, Averroës returned to Corduba, where he experienced all the miseries of poverty and contempt. In process of time the people became dissatisfied with the regent who had succeeded Averroës, and petitioned the king that their former governor might be restored. J. Al-Mansor, not daring to shew such indulgence to one who had been infamous for heresy, without the consent of the priesthood, called a general assembly, in which it was debated, whether it would be consistent with the safety of religion, and the honour of the law, that Averroës should be restored to the government of Corduba. The deliberation terminated in favour of the penitent heretic, and he was restored, by the royal mandate, to all his former honours. Upon this fortunate change in his affairs, Averroës removed to Morocco, where he remained till his death, which happened, as some say, in the year 1195; or, according to others, in 1206.⁵⁶

Averroës is highly celebrated for his personal virtues. He practised the most rigid temperance, eating only, once in the day, the plainest food. So indefatigable was his industry in the pursuit of science, that he often passed whole nights in study. In his judicial capacity, he discharged his duty with great wisdom and integrity. His humanity would not permit him to pass the sentence of

⁵⁶ Leo Afr. c. 20, &c. Bayle.

death upon any criminal; he left this painful office to his deputies. He possessed so great a degree of self-command and patient lenity, that, when one of his enemies, in the midst of a public discourse, sent a servant to him to whisper some abusive language in his ear, he took no other notice of what passed than if it had been a secret message of business. The next day, the servant returned, and publicly begged pardon of Averroës for the affront he had offered him; upon which Averroës only appeared displeased, that his patient endurance of injuries should be brought into public notice, and dismissed the servant with a gentle caution, never to offer that insult to another, which had in the present instance passed unpunished. Averroës spent a great part of his wealth in liberal donations to learned men, without making any distinction between his friends and his enemies; for which his apology was, that, in giving to his friends and relations, he only followed the dictates of Nature; but, in giving to his enemies, he obeyed the commands of Virtue. With uncommon abilities and learning, Averroës united great affability and urbanity of manners. In fine, he may justly be reckoned one of the greatest men of his age.⁵⁷

In philosophy, however, Averroës partook of the enthusiasm of the times with respect to Aristotle, and paid a superstitious deference to his authority. Of this his preface to the *Physics* of Aristotle⁵⁸ affords a singular proof. "The writings of Aristotle," says he, "are so perfect, that none of his followers, through a space of fifteen hundred years, have been able to make the smallest improvement upon them, or to discover the least error in them; a degree of perfection, which is truly miraculous, and proves him to have been rather a Divine than a human being." In another place he says,⁵⁹ "Let us bless God, who has raised this man above all others in perfection, and appropriated to him the highest degree of human excellence." And again; "The doctrine of Aristotle is the perfection of truth, and his understanding attained the utmost limit of human ability; so that it might be truly said of him, that

⁵⁷ Leo, l. c.

⁵⁸ Ap. Malebranche Recherche, &c. l. ii. p. ii. c. 7.

⁵⁹ Ap. Lips. Manud. Stoic. l. i. Diss. 3, 4.

he was created, and given to the world, by Divine Providence, that we might see in him, how much it is possible for man to know." Extravagant, however, as Averroës was in his admiration of Aristotle, it is unquestionably true, that he was unacquainted with the Greek language, and read the writings of his oracle in wretched Arabic translations, taken immediately from Latin or Syriac versions. The necessary consequence was, that his Commentaries on Aristotle were nothing better than a confused mass of error and misrepresentation. Yet such is the power of prejudice, that many learned men, since the revival of letters, have passed high encomiums upon Averroës as an excellent commentator. His writings of this kind were exceedingly numerous, and were so much admired by the Jews, that many of them were translated into Hebrew. Besides these, Averroës wrote a paraphrase of Plato's Republic; and a treatise in defence of philosophy against Al-Gazel, entitled *Happalath hahappalah*, commonly cited under the name of *Destructorium destructorii*; and many other treatises, in theology, jurisprudence, and medicine. He took great pains to improve the theory of medicine by the help of philosophy, and, particularly, to reconcile Aristotle and Galen; but it does not appear that he practised physic. Few of his writings are to be met with, except in Hebrew or Latin translations.⁶⁰

Much has been asserted concerning the impiety of Averroës, but without sufficient proof. It is probable, however, that he adhered with more devotion to his philosopher than to Mahomet, or any other legislator; for it appears, that, after Aristotle, he held the eternity of the world, and the existence of one Universal Intellect, inferior to Deity, the external source of all human intelligence,⁶¹ and consequently denied the distinct existence and immortality of the human soul.

Besides the Arabian philosophers which have been enumerated, there were others of inferior note, who acquired

⁶⁰ Leo l. c. Pococke ad Portam Mosis, p. 112. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. ii. p. 111, &c. Aver. Resp. Plat. ed. Venet. p. 1552. N. Anton. Bibl. Hisp. t. ii. p. 240. Huet. de claris Interp. p. 229. Mercklin. Lipd. Renov. p. i. p. 94.

⁶¹ Bayle. Conf. Rhodogin. Ant. Lect. l. iii. c. 2.

some degree of celebrity by their commentaries upon Aristotle, and other philosophical works, but which it is wholly unnecessary particularly to mention. There are also many great Arabian names, in astronomy, mathematics, chemistry, medicine, and other sciences; but for a distinct account of these we must refer to those writers, who have traced the rise and progress of the several branches of science through the Arabian schools.*

CHAP. II.

OF THE NATURE AND SPIRIT OF THE SARACENIC PHILOSOPHY.

THE historical view we have taken of the rise and progress of philosophy among the Arabians, and of the lives and characters of their more celebrated philosophers, will enable us to form an accurate idea of the nature and spirit of their philosophy. This subject will not, however, require a prolix discussion; for it is very evident, from the facts which have been related, that the Arabians did not frame a new system, but merely revived the Peripatetic doctrine, the features of which have been already delineated. In what manner this doctrine, and the general state of philosophy, were affected by their connexion with Islamism, and by the peculiar circumstances of the Saracen nations, it may be of some importance to remark, and we shall in this chapter endeavour to explain.

* Vidend. Leo Africanus de Viris illustr. ap. Arabos. Fabric. Bib. Gr. v. xiii. p. 96. 259. Goll. de Medic. et Phil. Arab. Dormius ad Jons. de Script. Hist. Ph. l. iii. c. 28. § 5. Hottinger Bibl. Quadripart. l. iii. p. ii. c. 2. Abulfar. Hist. Oxon. 1663. 4to. Elmacini Hist. Saracen. Lugd. Bat. 1625. fol. Eutychii Annales. Ox. 1658. 4to. Hottinger. Hist. Orient. et Bibl. Orient. Herbelot. Biblioth. Orient. Par. 1697. Ludewig. Hist. rationalis Phil. apud Turcas. Lackemaker de Fatis Studiorum inter Arabos. Horn. Hist. Phil. l. 5. Bayle. Conring. Antiq. Acad. Suppl. xix. xx. Friend's History of Medicine. Voss de Scient. Toletan. Hist. Arab. Avicen. Vit. et Op. Ed. Massæ. Venet. 1608. Merklin. Linden. Renov. Carn. Thograi Ed. Pococke. Ox. 1661. 8vo. Mod. Univ. Hist. v. xix. Assemani Bibl. Or. Bibliander. de Orig. et Mor. Turcarum. Bas. 1550.

Before the introduction of the Mahometan religion among the Arabians (which happened in the year 622) their manner of living was unfavourable to the progress of knowledge. Leading an unsettled and roving life, in which they were chiefly employed in the care of their flocks and herds, they had little opportunity, or inducement, to apply to any kind of learning; and it does not appear, that they had among them any other proofs of advancement in knowledge, than that kind of poetry and eloquence, which are commonly found in the early stages of civilization, and that attention to astronomy, which was common in the Eastern nations, and is natural in pastoral life. About the second or third century (for there is no sufficient authority for an earlier date) we find, indeed, that a sect arose in Arabia under the name of the Zabii, who derived their notions from the ancient religion of the Persians, and from the dreams of the Oriental philosophy concerning the Divine nature. This sect supposed human nature connected with the Supreme Deity by intermediate beings of various orders, Powers, Virtues, Spirits, whom they conceived to be instruments of communication between the first being and man, and to whom their religious worship was wholly addressed. They believed the bodies of the planets to be the habitations, or temples, of intelligent natures; and this notion became the basis of a fanciful and superstitious system of star-worship. The Zabian sect probably derived their opinions immediately from the Cabbalistic philosophy of the Jews, and from the tenets of certain Christian heretics, who, about the time when this sect appears to have arisen, resided in Arabia and its vicinity. But, whatever was the origin of this sect, it deserves little attention; for it was no better than a nursery of idle tales and puerile superstitions. Of the latter, Abulfarius furnishes the following example. The Zabii, believing in the resurrection of the dead, at the funeral of a departed friend killed a camel upon his tomb, that at the resurrection he might not be without a beast to ride upon.¹

Such was the state of philosophical knowledge in Arabia at the time when Mahomet appeared. This bold adventurer seized the opportunity, which the general prevalence of ignorance and superstition among his countrymen af-

¹ Abulf. apud Pococke, l. c. p. 139. Maim. Mor. Nebh. l. iii. c. 29.

forbade him, for passing himself upon the world as a Divine prophet. Himself wholly illiterate, and assisted by men who were better able to practise the arts of imposture than to teach the doctrine of truth and wisdom, it is no wonder that the law which this new prophet instituted, and to which he enjoined implicit obedience on pain of death, breathed little of the spirit of philosophy. The great object of the artificers of this law was, to suit it to the feeble understandings and gross passions of the ignorant multitude. For this purpose they filled it with vulgar notions, and romantic fables, as remote as possible from every thing rational. They who contend, upon the authority of certain Mahometan theologians, that whatever may be thought irrational in the Koran is to be taken figuratively, and explained in a philosophical sense, do not recollect, that the unlearned founder of the Islamitic law was a stranger to such refinements, and that it was not till long after the establishment of Islamism, that the necessity of introducing them was discovered. And even when the unphilosophical ideas and language of the Koran obliged the teachers of Islamism, as they became more enlightened, to adopt the figurative and allegorical mode of interpretation, and produced the sects of the Asharites and Motazalites, there still remained other sects, particularly the Moshabbehi and Cerami,* who adhered to the vulgar notions, or chose rather to impute their apparent absurdity to human ignorance, than to abandon ancient errors. The truth is, nothing could be more inimical to science, than the blind assent which Mahomet required to the doctrines of the Koran; the violent means which, as soon as he had acquired sufficient strength, he employed in propagating his religion; and the barbarous edict by which he prohibited among his followers the study of literature and philosophy. So successful was this impostor in his attempts to prevent inquiry, and to bind his vassals in the chains of ignorance, that it became a common opinion among them, that the Koran was a complete summary of every thing necessary and useful to be known; and, consequently, that all other learning might be safely neglected. They believed that the book itself was immediately sent down from heaven; and vio-

* Pococke, l. c. p. 226. Port. Mos. Diss. vii.

lent dissensions, and even persecutions, arose upon the question, Whether the Koran was the created or uncreated Word of God. The first period of the Saracenic history, which includes the Ommiadean dynasty, may be called the barbarous age of Arabian philosophy.³

After the accession of the Abbasidean dynasty, we have indeed seen that learning, and learned men, enjoyed the countenance and protection of the Arabian princes. But philosophy was rather called in to perform the office of a servile auxiliary to Islamism, than to resume her natural authority over the human mind, and rescue it from the tyranny of superstition. The princes themselves, rigidly tenacious of the doctrine of Mahomet, regarded with indignation every attempt to weaken its authority; and employed their learned men rather in rivetting than in loosening the fetters which the founder of their religion had thrown over the understandings of men.⁴ In the most enlightened period of Arabian philosophy, the utmost that was attempted was, to apply the principles of philosophy to the correction of the absurdities of Mahometanism. The learned professors of their schools were, indeed, thoroughly convinced, that Islamism could not long subsist unless it were corrected by philosophy. But in endeavouring to give a philosophical air to the crudities and absurdities of the Koran, the ingenuity of learned men, restrained by reverence for authority, framed a system of opinions, in which, neither the true meaning and spirit of the Islamitic law were preserved, nor the freedom of philosophical speculation was indulged; whence numerous sects arose, in which an unnatural alliance was long maintained between philosophy and superstition.⁵

Two mischievous consequences followed this alliance. The first was, that the absurd dogmas of the Koran were by this means so far glossed over, or blended with more rational tenets, that the Mahometans imagined themselves possessed of a law which would harmonize with philosophy, and with the doctrines of other religions, and were hereby confirmed in their attachment to a system founded in absurdity, and supported by imposture. The second,

³ Pococke, p. 220.

⁴ Elmacin. l. c. i. ii. c. 6. 8. 16. Eutych. Ann. t. ii. p. 375. 400—26. 492.

⁵ Pococke, l. c. p. 213—219.

that when it was discovered that the letter of the Mahometan law would not easily accord with philosophical notions, and that in attempting to produce this union inextricable difficulties and endless disputes arose, some resolved at once to treat all these speculations with contempt, and, without the trouble of inquiry, to acquiesce in the doctrines of the prevailing religion, however irrational; whilst others perplexed themselves with subtle disputations, till they were lost in the mists of scepticism, or in the thick darkness of atheism. Of this latter issue of Arabian polemics, the history of Islamism affords many examples.⁶

How ineffectual the efforts of philosophy were to solve the difficulties which arose in theology, appears from the disputes which were long carried on, with great subtlety and much animosity, among the different sects of Mahometans, concerning the decrees of God, and the freedom of the human will. Modern ingenuity has scarcely been able to invent a distinction on this obscure subject, which may not be found in the Arabian controversialists; yet, after all, the question remains undecided.⁷

Another cause of the imperfect success of the Arabians in philosophy, notwithstanding all the industry and spirit with which they prosecuted these studies, may be found in the state of knowledge among the Christians, at the period when philosophy passed over from them to the followers of Mahomet. In the second age of Islamism, that is, about the latter end of the eighth century, when philosophy began to be studied at Bagdat, the Eclectic sect being, as we have seen, nearly extinct, together with Paganism, almost the whole Christian world professed themselves followers of Aristotle; but derived their ideas of his philosophy, not from the pure fountain of his own writings, but from the adulterated streams of commentators, who were deeply infected with the Eclectic spirit of the Alexandrian schools, such as Porphyry, Themistius, Simplicius, and Joannes Philoponus. When, therefore, the Saracen princes, and

⁶ Reimmann. Hist. Ath. p. 530. Elmacin. l. ii. c. 4. l. lii. c. 6. Hottinger. Hist. Or. l. i. c. 8. l. ii. c. 6. Herbelot. Bib. Or. p. 929. Pococke, CP. 249.

⁷ Maimon. Mor. Nebh. p. i. c. 83. Reland. de Rel. Muhammid. l. ii. § 8. Pococke, p. 241. Hottinger. l. ii. c. 6.

chiefly Al-Mamon, became desirous of introducing philosophy among their subjects, and for this purpose invited learned Christians to their court, it was impossible that the Arabians should be instructed in any other system of philosophy than the Peripatetic, or that even of this they should form more than a very imperfect and obscure conception.⁸

This will still more fully appear, if it be considered, through how obscure a medium the Arabian philosophers looked into the mind of Aristotle. Not only were they unaccustomed to metaphysical abstraction, and unacquainted with the general history of ancient philosophy, but they were even ignorant of the Greek language, and were obliged to have recourse to Arabic versions, and these not taken immediately from the originals, but from Syriac translations, made by Greek Christians at a period when barbarism was overspreading the eastern world, and philosophy was almost extinct. The first translators themselves were ill-qualified to give a true representation of the Aristotelian philosophy, so obscurely delivered by its author, and so wretchedly defaced by his commentators. What then was to be expected from the second class of translators, who implicitly followed such blind guides? The truth is, that the Arabian translators and commentators executed their task neither judiciously nor faithfully; frequently mistaking the sense of their author, adding many things which are not in the original, and omitting many passages which they did not understand. These errors were transferred, with no small increase, into the subsequent Latin versions, and became the cause of innumerable misconceptions and absurdities in the Christian schools of the west; where the doctrines of Aristotle, after having passed through the hands of the Alexandrians and Saracens, produced that wonderful mass of subtleties called the Scholastic Philosophy.⁹

From these premises it is easy to infer the true state of philosophy among the Saracens. In every branch of science, in which Aristotle led the way, the Arabian philosophers followed him as an infallible guide. Logic was

⁸ Hottinger. Bib. Or. c. 2.

⁹ Patricii Discurs. Perip. t. i. l. x. p. 143. Huet. de claris Interp. l. ii. p. 198. Renaudot Ep. in Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. i. p. 812.

diligently cultivated in their schools, but always with a servile adherence to the Aristotelian method.¹⁰ In metaphysics, though some of these philosophers, particularly Averroës, reasoned with great subtlety, they chiefly made use of the abstract conceptions and nice distinctions of the Peripatetic philosophy, for the purpose of casting a veil over the gross and unphilosophical dogmas of the Koran. In morals, some of the Arabians, after the example of Aristotle, taught political and civil precepts of wisdom in popular sentences and aphorisms; whilst others, upon the metaphysical ground of the Aristotelian doctrine concerning the supreme good and the first cause, framed a mystical system of ethics, which placed the perfection of human nature in the intuitive vision of God, and an essential union with the Divine nature. Of the former kind of moral writings are, "A Collection of the Moral Sayings of Wise Men," by Ibn Havasen Cusiira, and "The Persian Rosary;"¹¹ of the latter kind are the "Mystic Poems" of Ibn Ahmed Busiris, and an allegorical piece "On the Love of God," by Omar Ibn Phared.¹² The mathematical sciences were cultivated with great industry by the Arabians, and in Arithmetic, both particular and universal, their inventions and improvements were valuable; but in Geometry, they were so far from adding any thing new to the treasures which were left by the Greek mathematicians, that they in many particulars corrupted their doctrine. An Arabic version of Euclid, preserved at Rome, and published by order of Pope Sextus V. gives the propositions in a form so confused and mutilated, as to afford an unequivocal proof, that the translator was very imperfectly acquainted with his author's method of reasoning. A similar want of accuracy has been observed in the Arabic version of "The Spherics of Theodosius," and of Ptolemy's "Doctrine of the Projection of the Sphere."¹³ In Medicine, to which the Arabians paid much attention, their chief guides were Hippocrates and Galen; but, by attempting to reconcile the doctrine of these writers with the physiology of Aristotle, they introduced into their medical system many inconsistent tenets, and many useless refinements.¹⁴ In the

¹⁰ Hottinger. Bib. Or. c. ii. p. 218.

¹¹ Ib. p. 269.

¹² Ib. p. 263.

¹³ Friend. Hist. Med. p. ii. p. 12.

¹⁴ Ib. p. 14.

science of Botany, though they made choice of no unskilful guide, and spent much labour in interpreting him, they frequently, for want of understanding the subject, mistook his meaning so egregiously, that in the Arabian translations, a botanist would scarcely suppose himself reading Dioscorides: nor were they more successful in other branches of natural history. Their discoveries in Chemistry, which, it is confessed, were not inconsiderable, were concealed under the occult mysteries of alchymy. Even in Astronomy, where they obtained the highest reputation, they made few improvements upon the Greek authors whom they followed; as appears from the Arabic version of the *Almagest* of Ptolemy, and from their account of the number of the fixed stars.¹⁵ There is one science, indeed, in which the Arabians must be acknowledged to have excelled all other philosophers, that which treats of the influence of the stars and planets upon the affairs of this world; but this science, if Astrology can deserve the name, owes its existence and continuance entirely to ignorance, superstition, and imposture; and, therefore, can reflect no honour upon the people by whom it was cultivated. Upon the whole it appears, that when Philosophy, in order to escape the violence of barbarism, took refuge in Arabia, she met with no very hospitable reception. The Saracens were too much under the dominion of authority and prejudice, to be capable of prosecuting the search after truth with an independent spirit. Wanting sufficient confidence in their own abilities, they chose rather to put them under the direction of Aristotle, or any other guide, than to speculate for themselves with the freedom of true philosophy: the consequence was, that, notwithstanding all their industry and ingenuity, they contributed little towards enlarging the field of human knowledge. We do not mean to assert, that there were no great men among the Arabians, nor that philosophy owed nothing to their exertions. We freely confess, that it was in a great measure owing to the light of learning and science which shone in Arabia, that the whole earth was not at this time overwhelmed with intellectual darkness. But thus much may be with confidence asserted, that the advances which the Arabians made in knowledge was very inconsiderable, compared with what

¹⁵ Friend. Hist. Med. p. li. p. 11.

has been done in modern times; and that, in the present enlightened state of the world, science can suffer no material loss, if their writings be permitted quietly to repose in that oblivion to which time has consigned them. The Arabians certainly fell far short of the Greeks in general knowledge; and it was only in a very few particulars that they made any additions to the fund of ancient wisdom. Since the original writings of the Greeks are come down to the present times, we have little reason to regret the want of those remains of Arabian learning which are still untranslated.¹⁶

The method we have prescribed to ourselves in this work, would now lead us into a distinct detail of the several branches of the Arabian philosophy; but since their tenets, as far as they are distinct from the peculiar dogmas of the Koran, are, without variation, those of the Peripatetic school, which have been already explained at large, this part of our task is superseded. We shall therefore conclude our account of the Saracenic philosophy, by subjoining, in a few words, the theological tenets and moral precepts of the Arabians, after they were enlightened by a free intercourse with Jewish and Christian philosophers.

According to Al-Gazel, the doctrine of the Arabians concerning God and Spiritual Natures was as follows:¹⁷

God created all things from nothing, and doth whatever he pleaseth. In his essence he is one, without companion or equal, eternal and immutable. He has no corporeal form, nor is circumscribed by any limits. He neither exists in any thing, nor does any thing exist in him. The Divine Essence admits of no multiplicity; his attributes therefore do not subsist in his essence, but are his essence itself. That God exists, is known by the apprehension of the intellect in this world, and in the eternal habitation of the holy and blessed, by immediate vision and intuition. Whatever happens in nature, happens according to the will and appointment of God, whose decrees are in all things irresistible. The Law, or Word of God, is eternal and uncreated. God has created all things for the manifestation of his glory, and will reward his worshippers, not

¹⁶ Conring. Acad. Sup. 23. p. 257. Lud. Vives de Caus. Corrupt. l. 4. p. 167. Fabr. Bibl. Gr. v. i. p. 816.

¹⁷ Apud Pococke Spec. p. 220—274. Reland. de Rel. Mahum. Compend. Ultraj. 1717. Port. Moa. p. 330.

according to their merit, but according to his own manifestations. Angels, the servants of the most high God, are clothed with ethereal bodies of different forms, and have different offices assigned them; and though neither their names nor distinctions are known, they ought to be loved and honoured. The souls of men are immortal, and their bodies will be raised from the dead. In the interval between death and the resurrection, souls remain in an intermediate state; and, after the resurrection, the good and faithful shall be rewarded, and the wicked and unbelieving shall be punished: but they who, after having suffered punishment shall confess One God, will, through his favour, be released from their confinement, and placed among the blessed.¹⁸

With respect to morals, Mahomet, notwithstanding all his pretensions, did little. Although he laid a good foundation, in the belief of one God, and a future state of rewards and punishments, he was so far from raising hereupon a superstructure of rational ethics, that he relaxed the bonds of morality; partly, by representing future happiness as chiefly consisting in corporeal and sensual pleasures; and partly by giving his followers a code of laws, in which atonement is made for moral defects and irregularities by the observance of superstitious rites and ceremonies. After the introduction of philosophy among the Arabians, the ethical system of Mahomet was, however, materially improved; so that it would be unfair to ascribe to the whole Mahometan world, or, even to the Mahometan religion itself, as it was in process of time corrected by philosophy, all the defects and errors of the moral doctrine taught by the Illiterate Prophet.

The fundamental precepts of Islamism are these: Believe in one God, and in Mahomet the prophet of God. Perform the appointed ablutions. Pray to God devoutly at the stated seasons, and according to the prescribed forms. Keep strictly the fasts enjoined by the law, especially the thirty days of the month Ramadan. Let your prayers and fastings be accompanied with alms-givings. Visit the holy temple at Mecca.¹⁹

¹⁸ Conf. Theophail. Vit. Hui Ebn Yockdan. Ed. Pococke Ox. 1708.

¹⁹ Vid. Lib. Mostatrafi ap. Pococke Spec. p. 301. Reland. l. c. (Sale's) Koran.

Beside the precepts of the Koran, the Arabians have always had among them lessons of moral wisdom, written in verse, in the form of aphorisms. Several collections of these sentences have been made by modern writers, from which it appears, that the Arabians, though they did not treat the doctrine of ethics scientifically, were very capable of thinking justly, and writing elegantly, on moral subjects.⁸⁰ One poet, in particular, appeared among them, who wrote a beautiful compendium of Oriental Ethics, under the title of the *Persian Rosary*.⁸¹ This was *Eddis Slack*, a Persian, who, about the middle of the thirteenth century, when the Turks invaded Persia, withdrew from his own country, and settled at Bagdat, for the purpose of prosecuting his studies. After experiencing much vicissitude of fortune, he returned home, and compiled the book just mentioned, which he completed in the year 1257. This work has been universally read in the East; and has been translated into Latin, and into several modern languages. From this Rosary, which is divided into eight chapters, we shall cull a few of the choicest flowers.

1. Paradise will be the reward of those kings who restrain their resentment, and know how to forgive. A king who institutes unjust laws, undermines the foundation of his kingdom. Let him, who neglects to raise the fallen, fear, lest when he himself falls, no one will stretch out his hand to lift him up. Administer justice to your people, for a day of judgment is at hand. The dishonest steward's hand will shake, when he comes to render an account of his trust. Be just, and fear not. Oppress not thy subjects, lest the sighing of the oppressed should ascend to heaven. If you wish to be great, be liberal; for, unless you sow the seed, there can be no increase. Assist and relieve the wretched, for misfortunes may happen to yourself. Wound no man unnecessarily; there are thorns enough in the path of human life. If a king take an apple from the garden of a subject, his servants will soon cut down the tree. The flock is not made for the shepherd, but the shepherd for the flock.

⁸⁰ *Erpenii Centur. Proverb. Arab.* Galland. *les Paroles Royaux, des Orient Paris, 1694.* 127. Hottinger. *Hist. Or. l. ii. c. 6.*

⁸¹ *Ed. Gentil. Amstel, 1651. fol. Lat. Persic. cum vers. Lat. fol. Amst. 1651. Lat. ver. 127. 1655. Hottinger. l. o.*

2. Excel in good works, and wear what you please: innocence and piety do not consist in wearing an old or coarse garment. Learn virtue from the vicious; and what offends you in their conduct, avoid in your own. If you have received an injury, bear it patiently; by pardoning the offences of others, you will wash away your own. Him, who has been every day conferring upon you new favours, pardon, if, in the space of a long life, he should have once done you an injury. Respect the memory of the good, that your good name may live for ever.

3. In your adversity, do not visit your friend with a sad countenance; for you will embitter his cup: relate even your misfortunes with a smile; for wretchedness will never reach the heart of a cheerful man. He who lives upon the fruits of his own labour, escapes the contempt of haughty benefactors. Always encounter petulance with gentleness, and perverseness with kindness: a gentle hand will lead the elephant itself by a hair. When once you have offended a man, do not presume that a hundred benefits will secure you from revenge: an arrow may be drawn out of a wound, but an injury is never forgotten. Worse than the venom of a serpent is the tongue of an enemy who pretends to be your friend.

4. It is better to be silent upon points we understand, than to be put to shame by being questioned upon things of which we are ignorant. A wise man will not contend with a fool. It is a certain mark of folly, as well as rudeness, to speak whilst another is speaking. If you are wise, you will speak less than you know.

5. Although you can repeat every word of the Koran, if you suffer yourself to be enslaved by love, you have not yet learned your alphabet. The immature grape is sour; wait a few days, and it will become sweet. If you resist temptation, do not assure yourself that you shall escape slander. The reputation which has been fifty years in building, may be thrown down by one blast of calumny. Listen not to the tale of friendship, from the man who has been capable of forgetting his friend in adversity.

6. Perseverance accomplishes more than precipitation; the patient mule, which travels slowly night and day, will in the end go further than the Arabian courser. If you are

old, leave sports and jests to the young: the stream which has passed away, will not return into its channel.

7. Instruction is only profitable to those who are capable of receiving it: bring an ass to Mecca, and it will still return an ass. If you would be your father's heir, learn his wisdom: his wealth you may expend in ten days. He who is tinctured with good principles while he is young, when he is grown old will not be destitute of virtue. If a man be destitute of knowledge, prudence, and virtue, his door-keeper may say, Nobody is at home. Give advice where you ought; if it be not regarded, the fault is not your's.

8. Two kinds of men labour in vain: they who get riches, and do not enjoy them; and they who learn wisdom, and do not apply it to the conduct of life. A wise man, who is not at the same time virtuous, is a blind man carrying a lamp: he gives light to others, whilst he himself remains in darkness. If you wish to sleep soundly, provide for to-morrow. Trust no man, even your best friend, with a secret; you will never find a more faithful guardian of the trust than yourself. Let your misfortunes teach you compassion: he knows the condition of the wretched, who has himself been wretched. Excessive vehemence creates enmity; excessive gentleness, contempt: be neither so severe, as to be hated; nor so mild, as to be insulted. He who throws away advice upon a conceited man, himself wants an adviser. In a single hour you may discover, whether a man has good sense; but it will require many years to discover, whether he has good temper. Three things are unattainable; riches without trouble, science without controversy, and government without punishment. Clemency to the wicked is an injury to the good. If learning were banished from the earth, there would, notwithstanding, be no one who would think himself ignorant.

The whole book from which the preceding sentences are extracted, whether written from the author's own conceptions, or compiled from other sources, deserves to be read as an elegant specimen of Arabian morals.²²

²² Vidend. Boulainvillier *Vie de Mahomet*. Ernest. Gerhard. de Theol. Muhammed. Reland. de Rel. Muham. Renaudot. *Epist. ad Dacier de exiguo pretio vers.* Arab. in *Fab. Bibl. Gr. v. i. p. 812.* Friend. *Hist. Med. p. II. p. 10.* *Compend. Theol. Muham.* Ultraject. 1717. 8vo. Pfeiffer. *Theol. Jud. atque Moham.* Kruger de *Fato Muham.* Lips. 1759.

BOOK VI.

OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE ANCIENT CHRISTIANS.

CHAP. I.

OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES.

IN the preceding books we have traced the history of Pagan, Jewish, and Mahometan philosophy, from the earliest times to the period of literary and philosophical darkness called the Middle Age. We next proceed to mark the progress of philosophy among Christians, from the birth of Jesus Christ to the eighth century: when, as will afterwards appear, it suffered material alteration and corruption in the Christian schools.

Although **JESUS CHRIST** demands attention and reverence under a much more exalted character than that of a philosopher, yet it will not be questioned by those who are more inclined to regard the real nature of things than to cavil about words, that the Christian religion merits, in the highest sense, the appellation of philosophy. For the weighty truths which it teaches, respecting God and man, are adapted to produce in the minds of men the genuine principles of wisdom, and to conduct them to true felicity. At the same time that it enlightens the understanding, it interests the heart; exhibiting Divine Wisdom in her fairest form, and supporting her authority by the most powerful sanctions. The school of Christ is free from the errors and absurdities with which the purest systems of Pagan philosophy abounded, and teaches every important principle and precept of religion and morals, with a degree of simplicity, perspicuity, and energy, which, in connexion with other more direct proofs, affords no inconsiderable evidence of the Divine authority of the Christian religion. It must therefore be the interest of every one, who is desirous of

making a right use of his reason, and attaining true wisdom; to become a disciple of Christ.

On these grounds, doubtless, it was, that the Christian fathers so frequently spoke of Christianity under the title of True and Evangelical Philosophy,¹ and called the professors of the Christian faith, Divine Philosophers.² In this application of the term, they were, however, far from meaning to pay any respect to Pagan wisdom; their intention was, on the contrary, to intimate, that the wisdom, which had been long sought in the schools of heathen philosophers, was only to be met with in the school of Christ.

The founder of the Christian faith was early ranked, both by the enemies and the friends of Christianity, among philosophers. Lucian classes him with Pythagoras, Apollonius Tyaneus, and Alexander. Several of the Platonic philosophers speak of him as a man animated by a Divine demon, and sent from heaven for the instruction of mankind. The Jews early accused him of practising magical arts. Some of the Pagan adversaries of Christianity even asserted, that Christ was indebted for his doctrine to the heathen philosophers, and particularly to Plato.³ On the other side, among the Christians, false stories were early circulated (probably by the Gnostics, in order to obtain credit to their fanciful tenets) concerning the supernatural wisdom of Christ in his childhood, many of which are to be found in a supposititious book⁴ entitled, "The Gospel of the Infancy;" and other fabulous reports of a similar nature obtained too much credit in the early ages of the church. But if, without regarding either the calumnies of infidels, or tales of superstitious believers, we adhere to the simple account given of Jesus Christ by the Evangelists, we shall find no difficulty in admitting, that he was appointed by God to teach men a kind of wisdom far superior to the subtleties of speculative philosophy, and to confirm

¹ Clem. Alex. Strom. l. i. fin. p. 357. Socrat. Hist. Eccl. l. iv. c. 27. Theodor. de Cur. Gr. Affect. l. xii.

² Clem. Al. l. c. l. vi. p. 642. l. ii. p. 380. Lactant. de Op. Dei. c. i. p. 97.

³ Lucian. Peregr. t. iv. p. 220. August. de Civ. Dei, l. xix. c. 23. Origen. cont. Celsum, l. vi. p. 279. Aug. Epist. 34. Conf. Bibl. Univ. t. x. p. 402. Balt. Def. de SS. Peres, l. iv. c. 11.

⁴ Fabric. Cod. ap. N. T. p. iii. p. 424. t. i. p. 168. Conf. Iren. adv. Hæres. l. i. c. 17.

them in the belief and expectation of a future state; and, consequently, that, whatever respect he might have claimed as a philosopher, he is entitled to much higher regard, as the Messenger of Divine Truth, and the Author of Eternal Salvation.

The *Apostles* of Jesus Christ, who were appointed by him to teach the Gospel to all nations, like their Master, relied more upon the Divine Authority which attended their embassy, than upon any human abilities or attainments. "They spoke, not with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but with the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power."⁵ So far were they from affecting human learning, that they frequently expressed contempt for the philosophy of the age; because they saw, that philosophers mingled with the truth many false opinions and vain fables, and involved themselves in endless controversies, most of which were, in fact, a mere "strife of words." The apostle Paul, writing to the Christians at Colosse, says,⁶ "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." This apostle was not indeed unfurnished with learning, having studied Jewish wisdom under Gamaliel, and having, as appears from several passages in his epistles, and from some incidents in his life, acquired, probably at Tarsus, his native place, a competent knowledge of Greek literature. But he disclaimed all confidence in these attainments, and relied for success upon the intrinsic excellence of the Christian doctrine, and the Divine power by which it was supported. And, with respect to the rest of the apostles, they were, unquestionably, men destitute of the advantages of a learned education; the author of our holy religion purposely choosing his ministers out of the class of the vulgar and illiterate, that his cause might the more evidently appear to depend upon its own purity and truth, without the aid of human wisdom. There is, then, no sufficient reason for ranking the apostles of Christ, as some Christian writers have done,⁷ in the class of philosophers.⁸

⁵ 1 Cor. ii. 6.

⁶ Col. ii. 8. Conf. Eph. iv. 6. Acts xvii. 18.

⁷ Horn. Hist. Phil. l. v. c. 3. See Bp. Horsley's Sermon on 1 Cor. xii. 4.

⁸ Vidend. Jons. Scr. Hist. Ph. l. iii. c. 4. Lamius de Erud. Apost. c. 16. Miscell. Lips. Obs. 96. t. v. Miscell. Berolin. p. iii. n. 11. Suidas,

CHAP. II.

OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE CHRISTIAN FATHERS,
CONSIDERED IN GENERAL.

AFTER the example of the apostles, their immediate followers, who are distinguished by the name of *Apostolic Men*, were more desirous to teach the Divine doctrine which they had received from Jesus Christ in simplicity and truth, than to render themselves illustrious by any display of human learning. They had no other design, than to spread the knowledge of Christ and his gospel in the world; and they executed this design with simplicity, fidelity, and magnanimity, without the aid of rhetorical embellishments, or philosophical refinement. Their genuine epistles, particularly those of Clemens Romanus, Ignatius, and Polycarp, bear many marks of that sincerity and zeal, which so eminently distinguished the writings of the apostles. But some pieces are ascribed to the Apostolic Men, which carry with them many internal proofs of forgery. To this class belong "The second Epistle of Clemens Romanus;" "The Apostolic Canons;" "The Apostolic Constitutions;" "The Recognitions of Clement;" "The Clementines;" "The Larger Epistles of Ignatius;" "The Epistle of Barnabus;" and "The Shepherd of Hermas." The Clementines, and Recognitions of Clement, were probably written in the third century, by some Jewish Christian of Alexandria, who made Clemens speak the language of an Alexandrian philosopher, in hopes of defeating the philosophers with their own weapons. But this practice of corrupting the simplicity of the Apostolic doctrine commenced much earlier than the third century. The first witnesses of Christianity had scarcely left the world, when the Shepherd of Hermas appeared; a work too strongly marked with the character of philosophical fanaticism to be received as the genuine production of an apostolic man. The writer of this work cer-

t. ii. p. 97. Houman. Act. Phil. v. ii. p. 56. Elswich Diss. de Philos. viris sac. temere afficit. Sandii Interp. Paradox. p. 151. Clerici in Joan. Ev. c. 1.

mainly borrowed from the Platonic schools, or from the Jewish Cabbalists, his doctrines of a good or bad angel attending every man, and producing all his virtuous or vicious inclinations; and of a peculiar angel appointed to preside over each animal.¹

The fathers of the Christian church soon departed from the simplicity of the apostolic age, and corrupted the purity of the Christian faith. This is chiefly to be ascribed to two causes: first, the practice, which at that time so generally prevailed, of clothing the doctrines of religion in an allegorical dress; and secondly, the habit of subtle speculation, which the more learned converts from Paganism brought with them from the schools of philosophy.

The practice of allegorical interpretation, which the Jews had learned from the Egyptians, and which, before the time of Christ, was common among them, the early converts to Christianity brought out of the Jewish into the Christian church. Some traces of this method of interpretation we find in the New Testament, particularly in St. Paul's argument against the Jewish advocates for the perpetual and universal obligation of the Mosaic Ritual, drawn from the history of Abraham, in the Epistle to the Galatians;² and in the typical application of the ceremonial appointments of Moses to the Christian institution, in the Epistle to the Hebrews. But a less sober and judicious use was made of this kind of language by the Christian fathers. This was more especially the case with those Gentile converts who had been educated in the Alexandrian schools, where, by the help of allegory, the several systems of philosophy were mixed and confounded; and with those Jewish Christians, who, by the same means, had been instructed in the Cabbalistic doctrines, which, before this time, had sprung up in Egypt, and passed thence into Judea. Several of those sects of Christians who were called Heretics, particularly the Valentinian Gnostics, made use of allegorical language to disguise the unmatured

¹ L. i. Mand. 8. v. iv. c. 2. Hieron. in Habac. l. i. ad c. i. 14. Conf. Plut. de Tranq. Anim. t. ii, p. 263. Theodor. de Cur. Gr. Affect. 8. 8. Censorin. de Die Nat. c. 3. Philo de Anim. c. 3. 3. Cabbal. denud. t. i, p. 3, p. 191.

² C. iv. v. 22.

alliance which they had introduced between the fanciful dogmas of the Oriental philosophy, and the simple doctrine of Christ. The orthodox fathers of the church, too, defended themselves with the same armour, both against heretics and infidels; applying, with more ingenuity than judgment, the symbolical method of interpretation to the sacred Scriptures. In the same manner in which Philo and other Alexandrian Jews had corrupted the Jewish church, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, and other disciples of the Alexandrian school, in the second century, introduced error and corruption into the church of Christ.³

The light of Christianity having, by this time, been spread through a great part of the Roman empire, many learned men, who had studied and professed philosophy, tired of the fruitless disputes which had so long been carried on among the Grecian sects, and disgusted with the infamous and fraudulent practices of many who called themselves philosophers, passed over to another master, from whom, on account of those characters of divinity which they saw stamped upon his doctrine, they assured themselves of receiving that satisfaction, which they had in vain sought in the schools of Pagan wisdom. Comparing the obscurity and barrenness of the speculations in which they had been engaged with the perspicuity and utility of the doctrine taught by Jesus Christ, they plainly saw, that darkness was not further from light, than the vanity of Gentile philosophy from the truth of the Christian religion.

It evidently appears, from Justin Martyr's dialogue with Trypho the Jew,⁴ that this comparison of Gentile philosophy with Christian wisdom was one of the principal considerations which induced him, and other philosophers, to become converts to Christianity. Accordingly we find, that when these learned men undertook the defence of Christianity against the Gentile philosophers, who supported the falling cause of Paganism by sophistry, imposture, and violence, they chiefly employed themselves in exposing the futility and absurdity of the Pagan religion and philosophy, and in displaying the superiority of the Christ-

³ Huet. Origen. l. ii. c. 2. Whitby on the Interpretation of Scripture, Lond. 1714.

⁴ P. 217, &c.

ian doctrine above that which had been taught in the most celebrated Grecian schools. This is the main drift of those apologies for Christianity, which were written by Justin Martyr, Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, Herimias, Clemens Alexandrinus, Hippolitus, Origen, Eusebius, and other Greeks; and by Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Cyprian, Arnobius, Lactantius, Julius Firmicus, and other Latin fathers: writings to which the cause of Christianity was at that time much indebted, and which, even in the present day, if read with a due attention to the state of philosophy and religion at the period in which they were written, will amply repay the labour of a diligent perusal.

Rejecting with contempt the whole apparatus of Pagan superstition, the Christian fathers naturally transferred the aversion which they conceived against this ancient monument of human folly, to those systems of philosophy which they saw employed by the learned in its support. Justin Martyr⁵ exposes the absurdities of the poetical theology of the Pagans, and undertakes to prove, that their philosophical doctrine concerning Divine natures was not less absurd. All the early fathers of the Christian church labour to overturn the principles upon which the several Grecian sects were founded, and to shew that they were inconsistent with each other, and with truth and reason. Such was their zeal in this argument, that they did not spare even Plato himself, whom, nevertheless, they acknowledged to have thought more judiciously and profoundly upon Divine subjects than any other philosopher.⁶

It was a circumstance which greatly increased the aversion of the Christian fathers to Pagan systems, that they saw innumerable heresies springing up in the church, which arose from the Oriental philosophy, as it was taught in Egypt, in conjunction with Pythagoric and Platonic dogmas.⁷ The dreams of the Orientalists concerning the Divine Nature were multiplied without end by the Christian Gnostics, particularly by Valentine, the founder of a sect

⁵ Cohort. ad Græcos.

⁶ Tertull. adv. Nationes, l. ii. Lactant. Int. Div. l. iii. c. 2. Cyprian. Epist. 55: Aug. De Civ. D. l. viii. Theodor. Therap. l. v.

⁷ Iren. adv. Her. l. ii. c. 14. Tertull. Præscr. c. 7. de Anim. c. 17. Pseudo-Orig. Philosophum. l. i. p. 5.

which arose in the second century, and spread through Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor.* This fanatic conceived the Divine Nature to be a vast abyss, in the *pleroma* or fulness of which existed, as emanations from the first fountain of being, *Æons* of different orders and degrees. The source of *Æons* Valentine called *Bythos*. To this he united a principal, which he called *Ennoia*, or *Sige*: from the union of these he supposed to be produced *Nous* and *Aletheia*, and from these, in succession, *Logos*, *Anthropos*, and *Ecclesia*; among the remote descendants of whom was Jesus Christ, and below him the *Demiurgus*, or creator of the world, who held the middle place between God and the material world. This fanciful system (similar to that of the Jewish Cabbala, and doubtless derived from the same source, the Oriental doctrine of emanation)⁹ was highly displeasing to those Christian fathers who were disposed to think more soberly and reverently concerning the Divine Nature. When they saw the doctrine of Christ corrupted by such absurd fictions, they were naturally led to inveigh against that false philosophy, from which they supposed them to have originated.

Notwithstanding the proofs with which the writings of the Christian fathers abound, of their enmity to Pagan philosophy, considered as a system of doctrines opposed to the Christian faith, it is, however, certain, that many among them were well acquainted with the dogmas of the Grecian sects, and, after their conversion, endeavoured to render their knowledge of philosophy subservient to the Christian cause. Having been in their youth instructed in this kind of learning, they now borrowed, from the Pagan schools,

* Iren. l. iii. c. 3. Tertull. contr. Valent. Justin. M. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 349.

⁹ The Valentinian heresy is supposed by Irenæus* and other Christian fathers, and by several modern writers, through their inattention to Oriental learning, to have been borrowed from the Grecian philosophy; but the contrary is evident from the similarity of this heresy to the Cabbalistic system, which has been shewn to be of Oriental origin; and from the testimony of Theodotus, whose account of the Valentinian and other Gnostic heresies† is entitled, "*An Epitome of the Doctrine called Oriental in the time of Valentinian.*"

* Hæres. l. ii. c. 14.

† Apud Op. Clem. Alex. et Fabr. Bibl. Gr. vol. v. p. 106.

weapons in defence of Christianity. They examined in detail the tenets of ancient philosophers, that, where they found them erroneous, they might expose their futility, and hence display the superior excellence of the Christian religion: and that where they appeared consonant to truth, they might make use of them, in their catechetical instructions, to prepare the minds of their pupils for the reception of the doctrines of Divine revelation. This latter use of philosophy was frequent in the Christian schools of Alexandria, conducted by Clemens, Pantænus, Origen, and others. These Christian philosophers did not scruple to avail themselves of all the helps which their learning afforded them, in the exercise of the arts of logic and rhetoric. They industriously enriched their writings with the moral doctrines and precepts of the ancients, as far as they would coalesce with the Christian institutes. Without addicting themselves to any sect of heathen philosophers, they selected from each whatever they judged to be consistent with the doctrine of their Divine Master, and capable of forwarding the great end of their office as teachers of Christianity. In fine, from the time that the simplicity of the apostolic age was forsaken, the Christian fathers studied the writings of the ancients, first, to furnish themselves with weapons against their adversaries; next, to support the Christian doctrine, by maintaining its consonancy to reason, and its superiority to the most perfect systems of Pagan wisdom; and lastly, to adorn themselves with the embellishments of erudition and eloquence.¹⁰ Basil wrote a distinct treatise, upon the benefits which young persons might receive from reading the writings of heathens.¹¹ His pupil, Gregory Thaumaturgus, in his panegyric on Origen, insists largely upon the same topic; highly commending him for having, after the example of his preceptor, Clemens Alexandrinus, industriously instructed his pupils in philosophy. And there can be no doubt, that Greek learning, of every kind, was at a very early period admitted into the Christian schools; not, however, without repeated cautions to young persons, to distinguish carefully between the true and the false, the

¹⁰ Clem. Alex. Strom. l. i. p. 278. Hieron. Ep. 84. ad Magn.

¹¹ Conf. Origen. Philocal. c. 13.

useful and the pernicious, in the writings of the ancients, and always to keep human learning in due subordination to Divine Wisdom.¹²

The fathers of the Christian church are, then, neither, on the one hand, to be considered as by profession philosophers, nor, on the other, to be denied the credit of any acquaintance with philosophy. Their great object was to apply philosophy to the illustration, confirmation, and defence of Divine revelation. We are not, therefore, to search in their writings for philosophical tenets, raised upon rational principles, and supported by logical arguments; nor shall we find among them, strictly speaking, any philosophical sectarians, such as Speusippus and Xenocrates were among the ancient, or Plotinus and Porphyry among the modern, Platonists. But, though they were not properly philosophers, it must not be inferred that they gave no preference to any particular sect. Whilst they were averse to the Grecian philosophy in general, as inimical to the Christian cause, and inveighed against every Pagan system, as containing many things contrary to the true doctrine of Christ, they were willing to acknowledge, that every sect taught some principles not inconsistent with this doctrine, and were most inclined to favour those sects which taught tenets most consonant to it.

Throughout the various systems of philosophy, the Christian fathers saw many truths dispersed, which they supposed to be beyond the reach of human reason, and which, therefore, they believed to have been borrowed from the Hebrew Scriptures, or to have been rays of heavenly wisdom originally proceeding from the pure fountain of Divine revelation. These relics of sacred truth, which they conceived to be scattered through the various sects of philosophy, they were exceedingly desirous to collect, and to incorporate with the doctrine of Christianity. Hence the high encomiums, which we frequently meet with in their writings, upon this kind of Eclectic philosophy. Clemens Alexandrinus says,¹³ "I do not call that philosophy, which either the Stoics, the Platonists, the Epicureans, or the Peripatetics, singly teach; but whatever

¹² Greg. Naz. Carm. l. p. 33.

¹³ Strom. l. i. p. 206.

dogmas are found in each sect to be true, and conducive to the knowledge and practice of piety and justice, these, collected into one system, I call philosophy." Justin Martyr,¹⁴ Gregory Thaumaturgus,¹⁵ and Lactantius,¹⁶ express the same sentiment. We are not, however, to confound the Eclectic philosophy of the Christian fathers with that of the Ammonian school; since the former were directed in their selection by a notion peculiar to themselves, that whatever was valuable in Pagan philosophy was the remnant of some former revelation from the λόγος, or had been purloined from the Hebrews or Christians, and might therefore be fairly claimed as the property of the Christian church.

By comparing the preceding observations, we may easily account for the different, and apparently contradictory, language which the Christian fathers held concerning the Gentile philosophy: some of them, particularly Clemens Alexandrinus and Augustine, speaking of heathen wisdom as lawful spoil, which may be usefully employed in the service of the church, and of certain philosophers, as being, in their notions of the Divine Nature, almost Christians: whilst others represented heathen philosophy as so pernicious and mischievous in its nature, that it could only be the work of the devil. In order to reconcile these seeming inconsistencies, it is only necessary to observe, that whenever the Christian fathers spoke in commendation of philosophy, they meant to limit their approbation to certain truths, which they conceived to have been originally communicated by Divine revelation; but that, when they inveighed against it, their censure fell upon those systematic masses of error, which they ascribed to human invention.

The virulence with which the supporters of Pagan superstition assaulted Christianity, sometimes led its advocates, in return, to load the Gentile philosophy with invectives, which, though they may be in part excused, cannot be justified. Their contempt and indignation did not, however, fall indiscriminately upon every sect; they estimated the merit of each by its supposed affinity to revela-

¹⁴ Dial. cum Tryph. p. 218.

¹⁵ In Orig. p. 10.

¹⁶ Inst. l. vii. c. 7.

tion, in the purity of its doctrine concerning God and Divine things. Hence their severest censures were pointed against the Peripatetic and Epicurean sects. The doctrines of the Peripatetics concerning Divine Providence, and the Eternity of the World, chiefly excited their aversion against this sect; but, besides this, they were much displeased with Aristotle, for having furnished heretics and infidels with the weapons of sophistry. The system of Epicurus, which excluded the Deity from the government of the world, and admitted no expectation of a future state, so directly contradicted the fundamental principles of the Christian religion, that it is not surprising that it should have awakened great indignation in the friends of Christianity, especially as they misapprehended the nature of his moral doctrine, and credited the calumnies, which had long before this time been circulated, concerning his personal character.

There were not wanting, however, among the Christian fathers, advocates for different sects of Grecian philosophy. After the establishment of the Ammonian sect, when Origen and his followers, with many others, favoured the Eclectic method of philosophising, which had been followed in the Alexandrian schools, they easily persuaded themselves, that as a coalition had in these schools been effected between Plato and Aristotle, it would not be difficult to accomplish a similar coalition between Jesus Christ and Aristotle. Others reasoned in the same manner with respect to the doctrines of Stoicism. The Epicurean was almost the only sect which met with no patrons among the Christian fathers.

But the sect which, for the reasons already assigned, obtained most favour in the Christian school, was the Platonic. None of the Christian fathers, indeed, entertained such an opinion of the perfection of the Platonic system as to subscribe implicitly to its principles and tenets; but they imagined, that they found in the writings of Plato many Divine truths, which he had received, either directly or indirectly, from the Hebrews, and which they had therefore a right to transfer from the Academy to the Church. Clemens Alexandrinus, Eusebius, and Augustine, were so strongly prepossessed with this notion, that they fancied a wonderful similarity between the theology of Plato and that

of Moses. Clemens¹⁷ speaks of Plato as the philosopher of the Hebrews, whose doctrine concerning God, and Virtue, and a Future State, agrees with that of the Scriptures: with Numenius, he calls Plato the Athenian Moses; and he even asserts, that Plato, in his *Theætetus*, describes the Christian life. Eusebius, in his *Preparatio Evangelica*,¹⁸ "Evangelical Preparation," quotes many passages from the Dialogues of Plato, to shew how nearly his sentiments and language approach to those of the sacred writings. Augustine, in some parts of his works, prefers Plato to every other heathen writer; and contends, that, in many particulars, especially those which relate to God, he was a Christian philosopher. He afterwards, in a distinct chapter, inquires whence Plato derived that knowledge, by which he so nearly approximated to the Christian doctrine. Having in a former work given it as his opinion, that Plato, in his journey into Egypt, had either conversed with the prophet, Jeremiah, or read the Hebrew Scriptures, he now retracts this opinion, because he finds, upon further examination, that Plato was born near a hundred years after Jeremiah was in Egypt, and that the Greek version of the Jewish law was made under the Ptolemies, about sixty years after Plato's death; and substitutes, in its stead, an unsupported conjecture, that Plato received his information concerning the Hebrew Scriptures, by conversing with some learned interpreter of the law.

This opinion concerning the Divine origin of Plato's theology was entertained on grounds equally precarious with the conjectures of Augustine, by the general body of the Christian fathers. They thought, that Plato, during his residence in Egypt, could not fail to become acquainted with the Jewish law, of which they believed, but without any sufficient authority, that a Greek version had been made prior to that of the Septuagint under Ptolemy Philadelphus. They conceived, that Pythagoras, in his Oriental journey, must have had frequent opportunities of conversing with the Jewish prophets, and that through his schools the doctrine of Moses must have passed to Plato. They were confirmed in this opinion, by observing the doctrine, which was at this time received among the Jews, with the Pla-

¹⁷ Strom. l. i. p. 315.

¹⁸ L. ii.

tenets of the Alexandrian schools. For, from the age of Aristobolus, the Jews had, as we have seen, admitted Egyptian, Oriental, and Platonic dogmas into an intimate alliance with the simple doctrine of their sacred books; and, in order to give credit and authority to the innovation, had pretended that Moses was the original author of this philosophy. This was maintained by all the learned Egyptian Jews, particularly by Philo; and from these, the notion would naturally pass over to the Christians, by many of whom, doubtless, it was entertained before their conversion to Christianity.

After what has been already suggested, in preceding parts of this work, to shew the improbability of the opinion, that Pythagoras or Plato were instructed by the Hebrews, and to account for the pains which Philo and other Platonizing Jews took to give their notions the sanction of a Divine origin, it is unnecessary here to enlarge upon the subject. We shall only remark, that, in forming this opinion, there were two points in which the fathers were greatly deceived: first, in supposing that the Jews freely communicated their doctrines to their neighbours, when it appears from their whole history, that they studiously separated themselves, in all religious concerns, from the heathens; secondly, in conceiving that the Platonism which was at that time professed was the genuine doctrine of Plato.¹⁹

There can be no doubt, that a strong predilection for Platonic tenets prevailed among those Alexandrian philosophers, who became converts to the Christian faith. These philosophers, who, whilst they corrupted the system, had been accustomed to entertain the highest reverence for the name of Plato, easily credited the report, that the doctrine of Plato concerning the Divine Nature had been derived from revelation, and hence thought themselves justified in attempting a coalition between Plato and Jesus Christ. A union of Platonic and Christian doctrines was certainly attempted in the second century, by Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, and Clemens Alexandrinus, in whose writings we frequently meet with Platonic sentiments and language;

¹⁹ Just. M. Cohort. ad Græc. Clem. Adm. ad Gent. p. 477. Stromat. l. i. p. 305. l. iv. p. 477. l. v. p. 560. Conf. Lamius de Trinit. l. ii. iii.

and it is not improbable, that this corruption took its rise still earlier. In opposing the Gnostic heresies, those Christian teachers who had been instructed in the Alexandrian doctrines, adopted from them whatever they thought consonant to Christian truth, and favourable to their cause. From the time that Ammonius Sacca, in order to recommend his Eclectic system to the attention of Christians, accommodated his language to the opinions which were then received among them, the mischief rapidly increased. Origen, and other Christians who studied in his school, were so far duped by this artifice, as to imagine that they discovered, in the system of the Platonists, traces of a pure doctrine concerning the Divine Nature, which, on the ground above-mentioned, they judged themselves at liberty to incorporate into the Christian faith. Entering upon the office of Christian teachers under the bias of a strong partiality for Plato and his doctrine, they tintured the minds of their disciples with the same prejudice, and thus disseminated Platonic notions as Christian truths; doubtless, little aware how far this practice would corrupt the purity of the Christian faith, and how much confusion and dissension it would occasion in the Christian church.

Having said thus much concerning the general character of the philosophy of the Christian fathers, it remains that we offer a few remarks concerning their merit in the distinct branches of philosophy; dialectics, physics, and morals.

It will be readily acknowledged, that the early teachers of the Christian church were honest and zealous advocates for the cause of Christ; and that many of their apologies discover an extensive acquaintance with ancient philosophy and learning, and serve to cast much light upon the philosophical and theological history of preceding times. But it must, at the same time, be candidly confessed, that, in the heat of controversy, they not only fell into various mistakes, but made use of unsatisfactory methods of reasoning, which betray imbecility of judgment, or inattention to the principles and rules of good writing. Correctness and strength of argument are excellencies seldom to be met with in the writings of the fathers. On the contrary, their works furnish innumerable examples of feeble

reasoning, of interpretations of Scripture which it is impossible to reconcile with good sense, and of a careless admission of spurious writings as genuine authorities. Photinus, who was a writer of sound judgment, complains that Irenæus obscured the doctrines of religion by illegitimate reasoning.²⁰ And this charge is applicable to many other of the Christian fathers. Lactantius affords a curious specimen of futile reasoning, when, in order to demonstrate the absurdity of worshipping idols, he says²¹—"When men take an oath, they look up to heaven: they do not seek God under their feet; because whatever lies below them must necessarily be inferior to them; but they seek him on high, because nothing can be greater than man except what is above him; but God is greater than man; he is therefore above, and not beneath him, and to be sought, not in the lower but the higher regions; whence it is evident, that images formed of stones dug out of the earth cannot be proper objects of worship." The puerility of this method of arguing is sufficiently obvious without any comment. Much false reasoning of the same kind may be found in the writings of Arnobius, Jerome, and others.

Several causes may be assigned for the defects, which every accurate observer must remark, in the method of reasoning adopted by these writers. Their injudicious zeal induced them to grasp at every shadow of argument against their opponents; and their want of skill in the art of reasoning led them often to mistake shadows for realities. Their fondness for allegory dazzled and confounded their understandings, so that they were unable to distinguish between fanciful resemblances and solid arguments. They had not learned to distinguish accurately between the light of revelation and that of reason; and therefore supposed, that their reverence for the former obliged them to depreciate and ~~vindicate~~ ^{justify} the latter. Ambrose, a learned man, but a bad logician, advised,²² that, in disputes where faith is concerned, reason should be laid aside. Basil²³ called reasoning, *The devil's work*; and refuted the heretic Eumonius by pleading, that his arguments were drawn from the categories of Aristotle, and that the wisdom of this world was deceitful.

²⁰ Cod. 120. p. 161.

²¹ De Fide, l. i. c. 5.

²² Instit. div. l. ii. c. 19.

²³ Contr. Eumon. p. 17.

Others, who admitted the lawfulness of using the weapons of Aristotelian logic in defence of Christianity, contended that Christians were possessed of a better logic, consisting in the demonstration of the Spirit; and that they who possessed this, might defend their cause without the arms of human reason. Whilst the fathers thought reason of so little value, it is no wonder that their reasonings were frequently injudicious and inaccurate.²⁴

It must be here mentioned, as another proof at least of their want of judgment, that the Christian fathers gave easy credit to false tales, and received, without careful examination, supposititious writings, which they obtruded upon others, and to which they referred as sufficient authorities.²⁵ Nor is it possible to exculpate them from the charge of having made use of, and even justified, dishonest arts and pious frauds, after the example of their adversaries. Add to this, that the style in which their works are written is, for the most part, tumid and puerile. In search of the dazzling ornaments of false eloquence, they frequently lost themselves in the clouds of obscurity. Innumerable passages occur in their popular writings, particularly in the Homilies of Chrysostom, which are more adapted to captivate the wondering attention of the ignorant populace, than to impress a judicious reader with an idea of the writer's good sense and accuracy. Gregory Nazianzen complains, that, in his time, simple and natural eloquence was lost, and that a thirst after novelty had led writers into lamentable confusion and obscurity.²⁶

With respect to Physics, little was to be expected on this subject from writers who were so deeply engaged in theological labours. The truth is, that the errors into which many of the ancients had fallen, through their ill-conducted inquiries into nature, gave the Christian teachers a distaste for speculations of this kind. They thought it a mere waste of time to search after the immediate causes of natural appearances, when they might be employed in studying the

²⁴ Orig. adv. Cels. l. i. c. 5.

²⁵ Fabric. Observ. ad Cod. Apoc. Vet. et Nov. Test.

²⁶ Phot. Cod. 150. Hieron. Ep. 24. ad Nep. Greg. Naz. Enchir. Athanas. Conf. Dallæum de Usu Patrum, l. i. Cleric. Art. Crit. t. i. p. ii § 1. c. 17. Petav. ad Epiph. Hær. 59. p. 244.

doctrines and duties of religion. "It is not," says Huetius,²⁷ "through ignorance of those subjects which are so much admired, but through a conviction of their futility, that we almost entirely neglect them, in order to apply our minds to more useful labours." This contempt of physical inquiries, which was common among the fathers, will account for the egregious mistakes which are found in the commentaries upon those parts of Scripture, where subjects of natural history or philosophy are occasionally introduced. Cosmes, an Egyptian monk, wrote a work,²⁸ entitled "*Christian Topography*," in which he maintained, that the form of the earth is plane, and not spherical, and upon this supposition attempted an explanation of the celestial phenomena. The author of *The Physiology*, falsely ascribed to Epiphanius, and inserted in his works,²⁹ treats of animals with most ridiculous ignorance and puerility. Even Ambrose, in many respects a learned writer, trifles egregiously upon these subjects. In explaining that part of the Mosaic history of the creation, which speaks of waters above the firmament, he refutes every objection by having recourse to the miraculous power of God,³⁰ and thus makes the thing to be proved the medium of proof. The engagements of his episcopal office might be some excuse for his ignorance of physical subjects, especially in an age when ignorance of this kind was so prevalent; but nothing can excuse his attempting to explain what he did not understand.

Ethics was a branch of philosophy, in which the fathers of the Christian church were more immediately concerned, as their office required them to instruct the people in good morals; but their attention to this subject was, by no means, equal to its importance. They were too busily occupied in disputes with infidels and heretics to have much leisure to attend to the simple duties of morality. Although in the writings of all the fathers, moral topics are occasionally touched upon, Ambrose was, if not the first, yet certainly among the first, who wrote a compendium of moral doc-

²⁷ Prep. Ev. l. xv. c. i. 61. Conf. Lactant. Inst. Div. l. ii. c. 23.

²⁸ B. Montfaucon. Collect. Nov. Patr. Script. Gr. t. ii. p. 113. Phot. Cod. 36.

²⁹ Tom. ii. Op. p. 189.

³⁰ Amb. l. ii. c. 3. t. iii. p. 17.

trine: it was formed upon the model of Cicero's book *De Officiis*. After the third century, the fathers treated more largely upon these subjects, as may be seen in their Homilies; but in a manner which rendered their moral writings of little value.

Among the causes which promoted the corruption of their moral doctrine, we may reckon the practice, which they borrowed from the Alexandrian Jews, of affixing an allegorical meaning to the words of Scripture. This method of interpretation, as Le Clerc justly remarks, enabled them to put any construction upon particular texts which suited their present purpose. What absurd interpretations they gave of the Old Testament (with the Hebrew original of which, by the way, scarcely any of them, except Jerome and Origen, were acquainted, as sufficiently appears from their implicit reliance on the Septuagint version) may be easily seen by consulting their works.²¹ Indeed it was not to be expected that they should succeed better, when they undertook to draw moral doctrine from the sacred Scriptures, without strictly adhering to the rules of sound criticism, and without being accurately acquainted with the general principles of morals.

To what an absurd extreme of rigour the fathers carried their ideas of morality, may be seen in their doctrines concerning the sexual passion. They commonly held a second marriage to be unlawful; and Chrysostom maintained, that it was a species of fornication; and that whilst this indulgence was permitted by God, fornication became lawful.²² With respect to matrimony, they admitted three degrees of merit: the lowest, matrimonial fidelity; the second, matrimonial abstinence; the third, perfect celibacy. Clemens Alexandrinus²³ represents it as a meretricious practice for a woman to look at herself in a mirror; "because," says he, "by making an image of herself she violates the commandment, which prohibits the making of the likeness of any thing in heaven above, or on earth beneath." As a further example to the same purpose may be mentioned, the doctrines of the unlawfulness of putting out money to

²¹ See examples of this in Barbeyrac de la Morale des Peres, c. li. § 3.

²² Chrysost. Hom. 32. in Matt. xix.

²³ Eccl. i. iii. c. 2 l. ii. c. 10.

interest, of using musical instruments in churches, and of taking any kind of oath.³⁴

Another principal cause of the corruption of the Christian doctrine of morality was, that it was very early tainted with the enthusiastic spirit of the Alexandrian philosophy. Many of the Christian fathers were infected with the practical, as well as the speculative, errors of this school. To this source we are to trace back the numerous adulterations of the simple morality of the New Testament, which are to be found in "The Shepherd of Hermas," and in the writings of Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Athenagoras, and Tertullian. This corruption chiefly discovered itself in a peculiar species of fanaticism, consisting in a certain mystical notion of perfection, which originated from a principle common to Platonists, Orientalists, and Gnostics; that the soul of man is imprisoned and debased in its corporeal habitation, and in proportion as it becomes disengaged from the incumbrance, and purged from the dregs of matter, it is prepared for its return to the Divine Nature, the fountain from which it proceeded.³⁵ The early Christians appear to have been led into this system, and into all the unnatural austerities which sprung from it, by observing the extraordinary sanctity of the Therapeutic sect among the Jews,³⁶ and of many ascetic Platonists who, in this respect, followed the example of the Egyptian Pythagoreans. Emulous of the fame which both Jews and Heathens had obtained by their voluntary mortifications, and, perhaps, too, inspired with an enthusiastic notion, that they should by this means approach nearer to God and be better prepared for heaven, many Christians, even so early as the second century, retired into solitary places, where they devoted themselves to abstinence, contemplation, and prayer.³⁷ It is impossible to enumerate the erroneous opinions, and absurd practices, which this false idea of perfection introduced into the Christian church, or to say how grossly it corrupted the Christian system of morals.

[The clear result of these general observations on the circumstances, opinions, and writings of the Christian fathers:

³⁴ Conf. Barbeyrac, c. 6. §. 10. 15.

³⁵ Clem. Alex. Strom. l. vi. p. 412.

³⁶ Philo de Vit. Contempl.

³⁷ Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 16. Conf. Past. Herm. et Apol. Athenag.

is, that they contributed little towards the improvement of true and sound philosophy. Whatever abilities or learning they possessed (and in several instances these were not inconsiderable) their peculiar situation, as well as the general state of philosophy, prevented them from making any important advances in science. Through several centuries, they partook of the spirit of the Alexandrian school, and the Eclectic method of philosophizing Platonized Christianity. And when, in process of time, the philosophers themselves began to forsake Plato and follow Aristotle, the Christian fathers preferred the Stagyrte as the more accurate philosopher. In this preference they were confirmed by the example of the Saracens: and hence arose that pernicious corruption, both of theology and philosophy, the *Scholastic System*. At the same time, the adulterated Platonism of Alexandria continued among the Greek Christians, and produced *The Mystic Theology*. Thus the church was at once disturbed by two monstrous productions in philosophy, of which we shall treat in the sequel.*

CHAP. III.

OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE CHRISTIAN FATHERS IN PARTICULAR.

FROM the beginning of the second to the seventh century, which may be considered as the commencement of the Middle Age, many learned men arose in the Christian church, who studied and applied philosophy in the manner explained in the preceding chapter. A distinct but brief

* Vidend. Moshem. Diss. de Causa supposit. lib. inter Christ. Sec. I. et II. Huet. Dem. Ev. Prop. iv. Origenian. l. ii. c. 1. § 4. Dupin. Crispus de caute legendo Platone, Rom. 1594. fol. Petav. Dogm. Theol. t. ii. l. 1. c. 8. Balt. Defence des S. Peres accus. de Platonisme. Balg. Defence of the Nicene Creed. Sand. de Trinit. Sandii Nucleus Hist. Eccl. Le Clerc. Bibl. Univ. t. x. Bibl. Choisie, t. xii. Epistola sub nom. Liberii. Basnage Hist. des Juifs, l. iv. p. 79. Fabr. Bibl. Gr. V. iii. p. 39. 176. Buddæi Isag. in Hist. Theol. l. ii. c. 3. Dupin. Bibl. des Auct. Eccl. t. i. p. 203. Blount. Cens. ccl. Auct. p. 213. Blondell. de Sybillis, l. i. c. 26. Moshem. Diss. de turbata per Platon; rep. Eccl. Aristæus de Usu Patrum. Souverain Platonisme dévoillé.

account of the principal of these, as far as respects the subject of this work, we now proceed to lay before the reader, referring him for other particulars to ecclesiastical historians.

The Christian fathers may be divided into two classes; those who flourished before, and those who flourished after, the institution of the Eclectic sect: and this distinction is of considerable consequence in the present inquiry. The first class commences with Justin Martyr; the second, with Origen.

The Apostolic Fathers, who had derived their knowledge of Christianity, and their habits of thinking, from the Evangelists and Apostles, were more desirous of imitating their simplicity of sentiment and expression, than of excelling in subtle speculation. Hence we find in their genuine writings but few traces of the Grecian or Alexandrian philosophy. But when men who had been educated in the Pagan schools became converts to the Christian faith, they brought with them their philosophical ideas and language, and associated them with the doctrine of Christianity.

Among these Christian philosophers, the first, and one of the most celebrated, was *Justin*, who, on account of the testimony which he afterwards bore to the Christian cause, is usually distinguished by the title of "The Martyr." He was born at Neapolis, or Sichem, in Palestine, about the beginning of the second century. His father, whose name was Priscus, was a Gentile Greek, and sent him to Alexandria to be instructed in Grecian learning. In his youth, as he himself relates, he studied, first the Stoic, and afterwards the Peripatetic philosophy, under different masters. Not, however, finding in either of these schools the satisfaction he wished concerning the Divine Nature, and having been refused admission to the Pythagorean school for want of the necessary preparatory instruction and discipline, he determined to addict himself to the study of the doctrine of Plato, who, for his sublime notions concerning God and religion, had long obtained the name of The Divine Philosopher. Under the direction of an able and judicious Platonist of Alexandria, he prosecuted this study with great delight, "finding," as he says, "that the con-

contemplation of Incorporeal Ideas added wings to his mind, so that he hoped soon to ascend to the true wisdom."

That he might proceed without interruption in this favourite pursuit, Justin withdrew to a place of retirement near the sea. He had not been long in this place, when, in one of his solitary walks, he was accosted by an old man of venerable aspect, whom some suppose to have been Polycarp; a supposition which Justin himself favours, by calling himself a disciple of the apostles, which seems to imply that he had been instructed by some apostolic man.¹ Whoever he was, this old man, in his conversation with Justin, discovered no slight acquaintance with the Platonic philosophy; for he made use of the Platonic principles and language, to which he found Justin attached, in order to conduct him to the knowledge of a more pure and perfect system. The discourse of this reverend preceptor, inspired Justin with an earnest desire of perusing the writings of the prophets and apostles; and when he had read them, he confessed, that the gospel of Christ was the only certain and useful philosophy. About the year 133, he embraced the Christian faith; still, however, retaining the habit of a philosopher.

Justin, after his conversion, retained a strong attachment to the Platonic system, and applied his knowledge of this system to the explanation and defence of the Christian doctrine. Perceiving, or imagining, in many particulars, an agreement between Platonism and Christianity,² he concluded, that whatever was valuable in the former, had either been communicated to Plato, by inspiration, from the Logos, or first emanation of the Divine Nature, or had been transmitted by tradition from Moses³ and the Hebrew

¹ Dialog. cum Tryphone.

² Epist. ad Diognet. p. 501. Conf. Euseb. Hist. Ec. l. ii. c. 3. et Phot. Cod. 234.

³ Apol. ii. p. 50. 78.

⁴ Though Justin repeatedly asserts the doctrine of Plato concerning the Logos to have been derived from Moses, there is no proof that this was in truth the case. It is therefore probable that Justin, from an undue fondness for his former master, endeavoured, in order to support his assertion, to find the Logos in the Old Testament. His proofs, that the Logos, an emanation from the Divine Nature, was the creator of the world, rest upon fanciful interpretations of Scripture, inconsistent with good sense and sound criticism, as any one may be convinced who will

prophets, and might therefore be justly claimed as belonging to Divine revelation, and incorporated into the Christian creed. All good doctrine, according to him, proceeds from the Logos, and, on that account, wherever it is found, of right belongs to Christians. "Next to God," says he, "we revere and love the Logos of the undervived and ineffable Deity, who for our sake became man, that partaking of our infirmities he might heal our diseases. All writers, through the seed of the Logos sown within them, are able obscurely to discern those things which have a real existence." And in another place, "We are instructed that Christ is the first-begotten Son of God, and have already shown, that he is the Logos, of which the whole human race partakes, and that whoever lives according to the Logos are Christians, even though [for the neglect of Pagan divinities] they have been reckoned atheists: as, among the Greeks, Socrates, Heraclitus, and the like; and among barbarians, Abraham, Ananias, Azarias, Misael, Elias, and many others."

From these and other passages⁶ in the writings of Justin,

be at the pains to examine his explanations of Gen. i. 26. xviii. 1, &c. xxviii. 11—19. Exod. iii. 1—6. Prov. viii. The truth seems to have been, that Justin, being of an enthusiastic turn, imagined Christ to have been the Logos, the first of those emanations of the Divine Nature of which Plato spoke; and that he fancied his own mind to have been, in a supernatural manner, enlightened,* to discover him as the Logos in the writings of Moses and Solomon. See this opinion ably supported in *Lindsay's* "Second Address to the Students of Oxford and Cambridge," ch. ii.

I. * Apol. ii. p. 83.

† In his dialogue with Trypho, Justin says,† "I will bring you another proof from the Scriptures, that in the beginning, before all creatures, God produced from himself a Rational Power (ὁ δὲς ὑπερῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τῆς ἐκείνου λογικῆς) which is called by the Holy Spirit the Glory of God, sometimes wisdom, sometimes an angel, sometimes God, sometimes Lord and Logos. —He has this name (Logos) from his being subservient to his Father's counsels, and from being produced by his Father's will, as we experience in ourselves." See the passage at large, with remarks, in *Priestley's History of Early Opinions concerning Jesus Christ* ‡ a valuable work, in which it is proved at large, that the notions of the first Christian fathers concerning the Divine Nature originated in the Platonic schools, and that these notions gradually produced the doctrine of the Trinity, which, from the time of the Council of Nice, was embraced as a fundamental article of faith in the Christian church.

* Dial. cum Tryphone, p. 154, 155.

† Dial. p. 266.

‡ Vol. ii. p. 56.

it appears, that he understood by the term *Logos*, not the reasoning faculty of the human mind, but, after Plato, the emanating Reason of the Divine Nature; that he conceived this Divine Reason to have inspired the Hebrew prophets, and to have been the Christ who appeared in flesh; that he supposed it to have been participated not only by the Hebrew patriarchs, but by the more excellent Pagan philosophers; and consequently, that he looked upon every tenet in the writings of the heathens, which he could reconcile with the doctrine of Christ, as a portion of Divine wisdom which Christians might justly appropriate to themselves. Having learned from Plato and his followers, in the schools of Alexandria, that the knowledge of God is alone to be gained by the contemplation of Ideas, which have their primary seat in the Divine *Logos*; and that the human mind, in consequence of its nature as proceeding from the soul of the world, is capable of contemplating those Divine Ideas, by means of which it may ascend to the knowledge of God, Justin was necessarily led to conclude, that man can only arrive at Divine science through the medium of the *Logos*. Hence, he referred all Christian knowledge to the perception of the Divine Reason inhabiting in man; and thus laid the foundation of an error, still retained in some Christian sects, that Christ, or the Word, is a substantial ray of Divine light internally communicated to man. Justin also borrowed from Plato his notion of angels employed in the government of the elements, the earth, and the heavens, and many other tenets not to be found in the Scriptures.⁷

On the whole, it cannot be doubted, that Justin Martyr mixed Platonic notions and language with the simple doctrine of Christianity, and wrote concerning God and Divine things like a Christian Platonist. He must, nevertheless, be acknowledged to have been a faithful and zealous advocate for Christianity; for, in consequence of an attack which he made upon the Cynic philosophy, Gressens the Cynic, who with the rest of the philosophers enjoyed the patronage of the Emperor Aurelius Antoninus, raised a persecution against him and his brethren, in which this excellent man fell a martyr in the cause of Christ. This happened in the year 163.

⁷ Apol. i. p. 44. Epist. ad Diognet. p. 496.

Tatian, by birth a Syrian, a Samaritan by profession,⁸ who flourished about the year 170, after his conversion from Heathenism to Christianity, became a disciple of Justin Martyr, and accompanied him to Rome, where he partook with his master the hatred and persecution of Cræcena. After the death of Justin, excelling more in the powers of imagination than of judgment, he gave the reins to the former, and formed a new system of fanciful opinions, called, *The Heresy of the Encratites*.¹⁰ His apology for Christianity, entitled, *Oratio ad Græcos*, "An Address to the Greeks," the only genuine work of this father which remains, every where breathes the spirit of the Oriental philosophy. Tatian teaches, that God, after having from eternity remained at rest in the plenitude of his own light, that he might manifest himself, sent forth from his simple nature, by an act of his will, the Logos, through whom he gave existence to the universe, the essence of which had eternally subsisted in himself. "The Logos," he says, "through the will of God, sprang from his simple nature;" *ὁ λόγος δὲ τῆς ἀπλότητος αὐτοῦ προσηλὸν λόγος*. This first emanation, which, after the Alexandrian Platonists, he calls the Logos; and which, like the Adam Kadmon of the Cabbalists, is the first medium through which all things flow from God, he represents as proceeding, without being separated from the Divine Nature. Matter is conceived by Tatian to have been the production of the Logos, sent forth (*προσφθιμένη*) from his bosom. And the mind of man is, according to him, *λόγος ἐκ τῆς λογικῆς δυνάμει*, reason produced from a rational power, or an essential emanation from the Divine Logos. He distinguishes between the rational mind and the animal soul, as the Alexandrian philosophers between *νοῦς* and *ψύχη*, and the Cabbalists between *Eleman* and *Nephesh*. The world he supposed to be animated by a subordinate spirit, of which all the parts of visible nature partake; and he taught that demons, clothed in material vehicles, inhabit the aerial regions; and that above the stars, *Aëons*, or higher emanations from the Di-

⁸ Orat. p. 170. 173. ed. Paris.

⁹ Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. iv. c. 29. Hieron. de S. E. c. 20.

¹⁰ Epiphani. Hæres. xlv. l. 1. i. p. 299. Theodoret. Hæres. Fab. l. i. c. 10. Philastr. de Hæres. c. 48.

vine Nature, dwell in eternal light.¹¹ In fine, the sentiments and language of Tatian upon these subjects perfectly agree with those of the Egyptian and the Cabbalistic philosophy, whence it may be presumed, that he derived them, in a great measure, from these sources.

After Plato, this Christian father maintained the imperfection of matter as the cause of evil, and the consequent merit of rising above all corporeal appetites and passions; and it was, probably, owing to this notion, that, with other fathers, he held the superior merit of the state of celibacy above that of marriage; and that he adopted, as Jerome relates, the Gnostic opinion, that Christ had no real body. The tenour of Tatian's Apology concurs with what is known of his history, to prove, that he was a Platonic Christian. Little regard is therefore due to the account which is given of his opinions by Epiphanius, who was unacquainted with the manner in which Christian heresies sprung from the Oriental philosophy, the common source, as we have seen, of the Egyptian, Cabbalistic, and Gnostic systems.

Theophilus of Antioch, born of Gentile parents, and in his youth well instructed in human learning and Pagan philosophy, after his conversion became an able advocate for Christianity. He was appointed bishop of Antioch in the year 168. Having long enjoyed an intimate friendship with Autolychnus, a learned Pagan, he was exceedingly desirous of converting him to the Christian faith, and for this purpose wrote an Apology for Christianity, in which he exposed, with much ability, the superstitions and absurdities of Paganism.¹² Several things in this apology discover the writer's predilection for the Platonic system, and his inclination to adapt it to the Christian doctrine. Particularly, in speaking of the Logos, as proceeding from the Divine Nature, and as the agent in the Divine operations, he makes use of Platonic ideas and language; doubtless, in hopes of reconciling his friend Autolychnus, who was conversant with the writings of philosophers, to the Christian system. His doctrine is, that God had always within him-

¹¹ Orat. ad Græc. p. 138—159. Clem. Al. Str. l. i. p. 326. Læil. p. 335. Excerpt. Theodot. Cl. Al. p. 806. Orig. contr. Cels. l. i. p. 16. De Orat. § 13. Euseb. Hist. Ec. l. iv. c. 11. 16. 29. Hieron. de S. E. c. 29.

¹² Apol. ed. Wolf. l. ii. § 14, &c. Ed. Oxon. 1700.

self his Logos, or wisdom, which he produced by sending forth from his bosom before the universe was created; and that this Logos was the minister, by whom he made all things, and who afterwards descended upon the prophets.

We may also rank among the Platonizing fathers, *Athenagoras*, the author of "An Apology for Christians," and of "A Treatise on the Resurrection of the Body." It appears from his writings, that he was a native of Athens, and that he passed his youth among the philosophers of his time. He flourished towards the close of the second century. After he became a convert to Christianity, he retained the name and habit of a philosopher, probably in expectation of gaining greater credit to the Christian doctrine among the unconverted heathens. In his apology, he judiciously explains the notions of the Stoics and Peripatetics concerning God and Divine things, and exposes, with great accuracy and strength of reasoning, their respective errors. He frequently supports his arguments by the authority of Plato, and discovers much partiality for his system. In what he advances concerning God and the Logos, or Divine reason, he evidently mixes the dogmas of Paganism with the doctrines of Christianity.¹³

According to *Athenagoras*, God is underived, indivisible, and distinct from matter; there are middle natures between God and matter; from the beginning, God, the eternal mind, being from eternity rational, had the Logos within himself: the Son of God is the Reason of the Father in idea and energy; for, since the Father and Son are one, by him and through him all things are made: the Logos was produced, that the ideas of all things must subsist, and they are contained in his Spirit.

On the imperfect and untractable nature of matter; on angels, demons, and other natures compounded of matter and spirit; and on other philosophical topics, *Athenagoras* reasons with all the subtlety of the Grecian schools; so that, in every page, you see him to be by profession a philosopher. One cannot peruse his writings without admiring in them an happy union of Attic elegance and philosophical penetration. In moral philosophy, he adopted the common austerities, particularly with respect to marriage.

¹³ *Apol. Athen. Ed. Par. p. 5—39. Phot. Cod. 234.*

The second century probably produced the learned work entitled, *the Heretics's Dialogue of the Gentile Philosophers*.¹⁴ The title as well as the title of the work renders it probable, that it was written by some philosopher who had been converted to Christianity. It contains no elegant compendium of the Greek philosophy. The author of the piece is unknown.

Another writer of great distinction in this early period of the Christian church is *Irenæus*, probably a native of Smyrna. He was a disciple of Polycarp and other apostolic fathers, and was well read, not only in sacred learning, but in ancient philosophy. Visiting the western churches, he became first presbyter, and afterwards, in the year 177, bishop of Lyons.¹⁵ He employed his learning and industry in refuting the Gnostic heresies, which had, even in the first age of the church, arisen from the union of the dogmas of the Oriental, Egyptian, and Platonic philosophy with the doctrine of Christ. It is, however, to be regretted, that this learned and zealous advocate for Christianity, having been less conversant with the Oriental than the Greek philosophy, did not perceive the true origin of the heresies which he undertook to refute. Upon a comparison of his writings with the Platonic system at that time taught in Alexandria, it will also be acknowledged, that his representation of Christian doctrines is strongly tinged with Platonism. He speaks of the Son as the minister and instrument of the Father in the creation of the world, and says, "That God had no need of the ministry of angels in forming the world, when he had his Son and his image ministering to him." This doctrine he advances in refutation of the Gnostic notion, that the *Demiurgus*, or creator of the world, was a Divine Emanation far inferior to the Logos.¹⁶ In several other particulars, *Irenæus* borrowed the ideas and language of the Alexandrian Platonists. He attributed a subtle corporeal form to angels and to the human soul, and held that the latter, after

¹⁴ Basil. 1553. 8vo. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. v. p. 88. Oxon. 1700. 4to. Cæc. Tatiani.

¹⁵ Euseb. Hist. Ec. l. v. p. 170.

¹⁶ Iren. Heres. l. iii. c. 8. n. 3. l. iv. c. 7. n. 4. p. 38. p. 3. l. i. p. 30. n. 9. c. 25. n. 8. Testall. in Val. c. 5. Hieron. Ep. 83. Epiph. Her. 31. c. 33.

show, retains the figure of a man.¹⁷ The hope of immortality he derived, not from the nature of the human soul, but from the will of God. He conceived man to consist of three parts; body, soul, and spirit.¹⁸ His moral doctrine was by no means free from superstition.

About the beginning of the third century flourished Tertullian, a native of Carthage. He appears to have been a convert from Heathenism to Christianity. In his writings may be discovered many traces of an acquaintance with ancient jurisprudence. Tertullian was intimately conversant with the several sects of Grecian philosophy, and, with Irenæus, supposed the heresies of the times to have been derived from this fountain. Seduced by a lively imagination, which appears in all his writings, and by his word against the Gnostic doctrine of *Æons*, which he ascribed to the Platonic notion of Immaterial Forms, or Ideas, he banished all pure intelligence from his system, and maintained, that all intelligent beings, not excepting even God himself, though not visible, are material. "Who can deny," says he, "that God, though a spirit, is a body? for spirit is a body of a peculiar kind. Even those beings which are invisible to us, have, with God, a body and form of their own; by which they are visible to God alone, since what proceeds from his substance cannot be unsubstantial."¹⁹ Tertullian inveighs with great bitterness against the several sects of the Greek philosophy, and calls philosophers the patriarchs of the heretics.²⁰ Nevertheless, in refuting them, he frequently makes use of Platonic notions and language. Concerning the Son of God, he says, that there was a time when he did not exist. In argumentation Tertullian is weak, futile, and sophistical. On moral subjects he held many absurd opinions; particularly with respect to marriage, war, and the power of magistrates. With several other Christian fathers he wore the philosopher's cloak; a dress which seems indeed to have been commonly worn by those, who took upon them the character of Christian philosophers, or devoted them-

¹⁷ Heres. l. ii. c. 34. p. 166. l. ii. c. 19. n. 7.

¹⁸ l. vi. c. 7. l. ii. c. 19. n. 6.

¹⁹ Advem. Præscam c. 7.

²⁰ De Præscript. c. vii. p. 232. Adv. Hermog. c. viii. p. 269.

selves to amesoteric life,²¹ as we find Tertullian did, after he became a Montanist.

None of the fathers of this period merit higher distinction, for erudition in general, or for the knowledge of philosophy in particular, than *Clement Alexandrianus*; nor was any one among them led further astray, by philosophical subtlety, from the simplicity of the Christian faith. This Christian father, who flourished between the years 190 and 217, early devoted himself to study, in the schools of Alexandria, probably his native city, and had many preceptors.²² As he himself relates, "One of these was an Ionian; a second was from *Magna Græcia*; a third, from *Cælo-syria*; a fourth, an Egyptian; others came from the *East*, of whom one was an Assyrian, and another a Hebrew:" a passage which, by the way, clearly proves, that those who studied at Alexandria did not confine themselves to Greek philosophy and literature, but engaged in the study of Oriental learning. His Hebrew preceptor, whom he calls the Sicilian bee, by whom sincere and incorruptible truth had been collected from the prophets and apostles, was unquestionably Pantænus, a Jew by birth, but of Sicilian extraction, who united Grecian with sacred learning, and was attached to the Stoic philosophy.²³ Clement so far adopted the ideas of this preceptor, as to espouse the moral doctrine of the Stoics. In other respects, he followed the Eclectic method of philosophizing. It does not, however, appear, that he was a follower of Ammonius, the father of the Eclectic sect. It is more probable, that before Potamo, or rather Ammonius, gave this method the form and name of a sect, Clement, like many other of his fellow-citizens and contemporaries, selected for himself, from the several sects, such tenets as best agreed with his own judgment. Whilst the Pagan philosophers pillaged the Christian stores to enrich the Eclectic system, this Christian father, on the contrary, transferred the Platonic, Stoic, and Oriental dogmas to the Christian creed, as relics of ancient tradition originating in Divine revelation.²⁴

²¹ Salmas. de Pallio.

²² Strom. l. i. p. 274. Euseb. Hist. Ecc. l. v. c. 2.

²³ Vales. ad Euseb. l. v. c. 10, 11. Chron. Ann. t. ii. an. 185. Phot. Cod. 118. Hieron. Ep. 84.

²⁴ Strom. l. i. p. 313.

He expressly asserts, that philosophy was communicated to the Greeks from heaven, as their proper testament or covenant; and that it was to them, what the law of Moses was to the Hebrews. In hopes of recommending Christianity to his catechumens (for, after Pantaenus, he had the charge of the Christian catechetical school in Alexandria)† Clement made a large collection of ancient wisdom, under the name of *Stromata*; assigning this reason for the undertaking, that much truth is mixed with the dogmas of philosophers, or rather covered and concealed in their writings, like the kernel within its shell.⁶⁶ This work is of great value, as it contains many quotations, and relates many facts not elsewhere preserved. But, though the object of his labours was laudable, it must be confessed, that his inclination to blend heathen tenets with Christian doctrines rendered his writings in many respects injurious to the Christian cause. His vast reading encumbered his judgment; and his injudicious zeal sometimes led him into credulity, if not into dishonesty. He admitted the authority of doubtful, and even of spurious writings. He quotes as authentic the work entitled, “The Preaching of Peter and Paul,”⁶⁷ which Jerome acknowledges to be spurious. In like manner, he admits the doubtful authority of Aristobolus, Aristæus, and others, and on this ground maintains the inspiration of the Septuagint version of the Hebrew Scriptures.

The erroneous explanations which Clement gives of the tenets of the Grecian sects betray both prejudice and precipitation. As one example of this, out of many others which might be selected from his writings, we shall mention the manner in which he supports the assertion, that Plato agrees with Moses in his account of the production of the world. “Plato affirms,” says he, “that the world was originally produced (*γενεσθαι*) from some principle, and speaks of God as the former and father of the universe; herein declaring that the world is not only begotten, but begotten as a son from a father.”⁶⁸ a representation

⁶⁶ Phot. l. c.

⁶⁷ Strom. l. i. p. 278, 279. l. i. c. 3. p. 83. l. iii. p. 443.

⁶⁸ Strom. l. vi. p. 636. Conf. Fabr. Cod. ap. N. T. p. 797. Hieron. de Scr. Eccl. c. i. p. 19.

⁶⁹ Strom. l. v. p. 592. Conf. p. 593—5.

equally inconsistent with the Mosiac doctrine of creation, and with Plato's notion of the formation of the world from pre-existent matter.

We frequently find Clement adopting Platonic and Stoic tenets as Christian doctrines, and thus sowing the seeds of error in the Christian church. He speaks, for example, of the Christian doctrine, respecting the government of the passions, as coincident with the Stoic doctrine of apathy, and makes the perfect Christian a character exactly similar to the wise man of the Stoics. He even falls so far into the rant of the Porch, as to adopt their absurd language concerning the possibility of attaining absolute independence and perfection.⁶⁰

Among the doctrines of Clement are these: that the Logos is the image of the Father, and man the image of the Logos; that the Logos proceeded from God for the purpose of creation; that the world is produced from God, as a son from a father; that there are two worlds, the sensible and the intelligible; that angels are corporeal; that the Greeks received their wisdom from the inferior angels; that man has two souls, the rational and the irrational; that the perfection of human nature consists in the contemplation of Ideas; and that the stars⁶¹ are animated by a rational soul: positions which approach nearer to the Platonic or the Gnostic systems, than to the simple doctrine of Christianity. Clement also asserts, that Plato received his doctrine of Ideas from Moses, and intimates, that the Egyptians borrowed their doctrine of Transmigration from the Hebrews.⁶² From these particulars, the philosophical spirit and character of Clement of Alexandria may be easily inferred. What fruit it produced will appear in the history of his pupil Origen.

The Christian fathers, in the period we have hitherto considered, formed different ideas of ancient philosophy, and applied its dogmas differently, according to their respective talents and modes of education. But in the third

⁶⁰ L. vi. p. 649.

⁶¹ Strom. l. v. p. 592, 3. Admon. ad Gent. p. 62. Strom. l. v. p. 553. l. vii. p. 702. Pædag. l. iii. c. 2. p. 222. l. i. c. 61. Strom. l. vi. p. 648. l. i. p. 272. l. vii. p. 718.

⁶² In Eclogis. Phot. Cod. 109.

⁶³ Strom. l. v. p. 553. l. vi. p. 633.

century, when Ammonius, following the ideas of Plato, founded the Neoplatonic system, and had a numerous train of disciples, a new order of Christian preceptors arose, who subjected themselves to this new sect, so far as to teach Christianity after the manner of the Ammonian school.³² The most celebrated of this class of Christian fathers was Origen, who had many followers, and whose tenets had an extensive and lasting influence upon the state of opinions in the Christian church.

Origen,³⁴ called also, on account of his invincible perseverance and patience, Adamantius,³⁵ was born at Alexandria, in the year 184, or 185. From his childhood he enjoyed the benefit of a liberal education. He became an early catechumen in the Christian school of Alexandria under Clement, by whom he was introduced to an acquaintance with philosophy, and impressed with a strong persuasion of its utility as preparatory to the study of Christian truth.³⁶ Thus prepared, he passed over, with great avidity, from the initiatory instructions of Clement, to the philosophical school of Ammonius,³⁷ which was frequented both by Pagans and Christians. This philosopher, as we have already seen, was a man of a wild imagination and fanatical spirit, who, despising the simplicity of the Christian doctrine, revolted to Paganism, and from the dogmas of the Oriental and the Grecian philosophy framed a new system. In order to gloss over his apostacy from Christianity, he was particularly desirous of admitting Christian doctrines into his crude and inconsistent chaos of opinions, and claimed to himself the merit of reconciling philosophy with revelation. Under such a master, it may be easily conceived, that Origen would become well acquainted with the writings of the Greek philosophers; and this is expressly attested by Eusebius. At the same time, by the aid of ready ability and great industry, he made himself master of all the learning of the times.³⁸

bridg 611. 1. 1. 1. 1.

³² Hieroc. apud Phot. Cod. 214.

³⁴ Huet. Origeniana. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. v. p. 237. Suidas.

³⁵ Epiph. Hær. 64. c. 78.

³⁶ Euseb. Hist. Ec. l. vi. c. 3. 6.

³⁷ Ib. c. 19.

³⁸ Suidas in Origen. Hieron. de Scr. Eccl. c. 54. Euseb. l. c. l. vi. c. 2. 20.

With these qualifications, Origen, about the eighteenth year of his age, opened a school in Alexandria for the instruction of youth in grammatical and philosophical learning. The circumstance which led him to take upon him this charge so early, reflects too much honour upon his memory to be omitted. His father Leonidas having suffered martyrdom, all his property was confiscated, and Origen's mother, with six children, was left without any other support than the bounty of certain Alexandrian martrons. In these circumstances, Origen undertook the instruction of youth, to furnish his mother and her family with the means of subsistence, and his filial piety was amply rewarded; for his school soon became so famous, that it was crowded with young men both of Christian and Pagan families, and he acquired a considerable portion of wealth.³⁹

After the death of Clement, when Origen took upon him the charge of the Christian catechetical school, he closely followed the steps of his predecessor; taking great pains to instruct his pupils in the tenets of the several sects of philosophy, as the most probable means of convincing them of the superior excellence of Christianity. At the same time he inculcated upon them, by precept, authority, and example, an austere and rigid system of morals.⁴⁰ The severity of his own manners may be inferred from several circumstances mentioned by Eusebius; particularly, that he wore no shoes, nor more than one coat; and that he prevented all sexual desires by voluntary emasculation; an unusual kind of self-denial, to which he was probably led by an injudicious explanation of certain Christian precepts.

Having in this manner raised an eminent school, in which the Alexandrian philosophy was employed to illustrate and establish the doctrine of Christianity, Origen found little difficulty in spreading his tenets beyond Alexandria, through Palestine, Syria, and other countries which he visited, partly to negotiate certain ecclesiastical affairs, and partly to escape the violence of Demetrius, bishop

³⁹ Euseb. l. c. c. 2; 3.

⁴⁰ Euseb. l. c. Epiph. Hær. 64. c. 2. 61. c. 1. Greg. Thaumaturg. Parerg. p. 10, &c. Rd. Hoesh.

of Alexandria. In the course of his journey he passed through Greece, and made some stay at Athens, where he attended the schools of the philosophers, who at this time enjoyed the patronage of the emperor Marcus Aurelius. At last he settled at Cæsarea, where he taught both sacred and profane learning to a numerous train of disciples, among whom was Porphyry.⁴¹ Origen died in the year 253.

By the help of lively talents, a ready elocution, and great industry, Origen was one of the most popular preceptors of the age; and was therefore able, not only to disseminate his opinions far abroad during his life, but to transmit them to succeeding times. It will therefore be necessary to take some notice of the sources, and the leading heads, of his doctrine.

The allegorical method of explaining the writings and traditions of the ancients, long practised in Egypt, having been adopted by the Jews who had been educated in the Alexandrian schools, and particularly by Philo, these examples were followed by Origen; and thus a fanciful method of interpreting the Scriptures was encouraged, which opened a wide door to error and delusion. As the Alexandrian philosophers had, by this expedient, been able to accommodate the Pagan mythology to their respective systems; and as Ammonius had employed it to reconcile the supposed truths of revelation with his new modeled Platonism; so Origen hoped, by the same method, to establish a union between Heathen philosophy and Christian doctrine. His fundamental canon of criticism was, that wherever the literal sense of Scripture was not obvious, or not clearly consistent with his tenets, the words were to be understood in a spiritual and mystical sense: a rule by which he could easily incorporate any fancies, either original or borrowed, with the Christian creed.

The principal tenets of Origen are these: The Deity is limited in his operations by the imperfect nature of matter. The Divine Nature is the fountain of matter, and is itself, though free from gross corporeality, in some sense, material. God, angels, and the souls of men, are of one and

⁴¹ Euseb. l. c. c. 3: 18—20. Hieron. de Scr. Ec. c. 54.

the same substance. There are in the Divine Nature three *hypostases*, subsistences. The Son, proceeding from the Father like a solar ray, differs from, and is inferior to him: he is the first emanation from God, dependant upon him, and his minister in creation. Minds are of various orders, and, according to the use or abuse of liberty, they are placed in various regions of the world, which was made for this purpose. Angels are clothed with a subtle corporeal vehicle. Evil spirits are degraded by being confined to a grosser body; and in these they are purged from their guilt, till they are prepared to ascend to a higher order. Every man is attended both by a good and a bad angel. Human souls were formed by God before the bodies, into which they are sent as into a prison, for the punishment of their sins: they pass from one body to another. The heavenly bodies are animated by souls which have preserved their purity; and these souls are capable of predicting future events. All things are in perpetual rotation, receding from, and at last returning to, the Divine Fountain: whence an eternal succession of worlds, and the final restoration of the souls of bad men, and of devils, after certain purgations, to happiness.⁴² The souls of the good are continually advancing in perfection, and rising to a higher state: matter itself will be hereafter refined into a better substance; and, after the great revolution of ages, all things will return to their source, and God will be all in all.⁴³

These tenets, which approach nearer to the doctrine of Ammonius or Plotinus than to that of Christ, may be ultimately traced up to that Emanative system, which gave rise to Gnosticism, and to the Jewish Cabbala. It is much to be regretted that Origen, who had, unquestionably, talents and merit superior to most of his contemporaries, should have suffered himself to be so far misled by the authority of Clement, and the example of the apostate Ammonius, and by a fondness for allegory, as thus to attempt

⁴² *Contra Celsum*. In *Joan*. t. ii. p. 49—70. *De Principiis*, l. i. ii. iv. *Phot. Cod.* 117. 234, 235. *Hieron. Ep.* 59. *Epiph. Hæres.* 64. c. 17. *Huet. Origeniana*.

⁴³ *Philocal.* c. i. *Princ.* l. i. c. 6. 12. l. iii. c. 6. l. ii. c. 3. *Phot.* 234. *Huet. Orig.*

was the doctrine of a mystical system of philosophy with the doctrine of Christianity. The fatal effects of this unnatural combination were widely extended and long experienced.

While the Alexandrian philosophy had many patrons in the Christian church, the systems of other sects were not without their admirers. The Stoic doctrine found an advocate, as has already been said, in Pantænus. The Peripatetic philosophy, though it contradicted the Christian system, particularly in its dogmas concerning the eternity of the world, and concerning Divine Providence, was studied, first by the heretical, and afterwards by the orthodox sects, in order to furnish themselves with logical arguments in defence of their respective opinions.

Anatolius,† of Alexandria, whose extensive acquaintance with philosophy and literature qualified him for the undertaking, at the request of the Alexandrians, who lamented the failure of the Peripatetic school, attempted with respect to the doctrine of Aristotle, what Plotinus had executed with respect to that of Plato. Making the tenets of the Peripatetic sect the basis of his system, he incorporated with them other doctrines, both Pagan and Christian, and thus formed a new school, in which Aristotle was the chief master. But, none of his commentaries upon Aristotle being extant, the particular manner in which he philosophized is unknown. After residing many years in Alexandria, Anatolius (on what occasion is uncertain) went into Syria: he afterwards became bishop of Laodicea, about the year 270. This Christian father was well skilled in mathematical learning, and wrote a work entitled "The Paschal Canon," of which a Latin version remains; and "Institutes of Arithmetic," extracts from which are preserved in a collection, entitled, *Theologumena Arithmetica*. Some fragments of his philosophical writings are collected by Fabricius; whence it appears, that, after the example of Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle, he made mathematical learning subservient to philosophy.

The aspect which philosophy had assumed among the Christian fathers in the third century, it retained in the

† Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. vii. c. 32. Hieron. de Scr. Eccl. c. 73.

† Fab. Bib. Gr. v. ii. p. 274. v. v. p. 277.

fourth. Many learned men, who were well acquainted with Greek literature and philosophy, after the example of their predecessors, employed their ability and learning, in opposing Pagan superstition, and contending for the Christian faith: and in this important service they laboured with great success. Still, however, the prejudice in favour of the Platonic doctrine, as either immediately or ultimately derived from the Divine Logos, and therefore as part of revelation, remained among them, and continued to fix and perpetuate the errors which it had introduced. Among the names which distinguish this period, the principal are Arnobius, Lactantius, Eusebius Pamphilus, Didymus of Alexandria, and Augustine.

Arnobius, an African by birth, and a rhetorician by profession, from a warm patron of Gentile superstition became a zealous defender of the Christian faith: but his zeal far surpassed his judgment. He depreciated human reason, and maintains the uncertainty of all human knowledge: he rests the belief of the existence of God upon no rational argument, but upon an innate principle. With the Platonists, he imputes the disorders of nature to the imperfection of matter. In fine, it is in vain to search for accurate reasoning in the writings of this father, whose education, talents, and principles, led him to excel in eloquence rather than philosophy.⁴⁶

Lactantius, a pupil of Arnobius, and probably an African by birth, is justly celebrated for several elegant treatises. His principal object was to expose the errors and contradictions of Pagan writers on the subjects of theology and morals, and hereby to establish the credit and authority of the Christian religion:⁴⁷ and his works are written with much purity and elegance of style, and discover great erudition. Several material defects must, however, be remarked in this writer. He frequently quotes and recommends spurious writings as if they were genuine, and makes use of sophistical and puerile reasonings.⁴⁸ Of his puerilities, a specimen has been given in the preceding chapter; and others may be seen in what he has advanced

⁴⁶ Arnob. de Christ. Rel. Ed. Canter. Conf. l. i. c. 8, 9, 20, 27, 30, l. ii. c. 2, 9, 11, 12.

⁴⁷ Instit. Divin. Ed. Lugd. 1567.

⁴⁸ Ib. l. i. c. 5.

concerning the pre-existence of souls, the Millennium, the coming of Elias, and many other topics in theology. Lactantius sometimes falls into egregious mistakes, through his deficiency in physical knowledge. Speaking of the human body, he says, "Of many of its parts none can explain the power or use but the Maker: who, for example, can explain the use of the kidneys, the spleen, the liver, the bile, or the heart?"⁴⁹ What inexcusable ignorance in a writer of no inconsiderable erudition! Upon the subject of morals, Lactantius has occasionally said excellent things;⁵⁰ but they are mixed with others, injudicious, trifling, or extravagant. He maintains that war is in all cases unlawful, because it is a violation of the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill."⁵¹ He censures navigation and foreign merchandise, condemns all kinds of usury, and falls into other absurdities on moral topics. We must not, however, dismiss Lactantius without mentioning, to his credit, that he acknowledges,⁵² that when Pythagoras and Plato visited barbarous nations in order to inform themselves concerning their sacred doctrines and rites, they did not become acquainted with the Hebrews; an observation which, had it been earlier admitted, might have prevented many mistakes in the history of philosophy. Lactantius flourished at the beginning of the fourth century.

Eusebius Pamphilus, of Caesarea, born about the year 270, is a writer who deserves to be mentioned with particular respect. This learned bishop, entertaining the common notion, that the ancient philosophers had received many truths, either immediately or by tradition, from Divine revelation, whilst in other particulars their writings were full of absurdities, contradictions, and falsehoods, undertook to raise upon this ground a defence of the Divine original of Christianity. This great design he completed in two valuable works, his *Preparatio et Demonstratio*.

⁴⁹ De Opif. Dei, c. 14.

⁵⁰ As a proof that Lactantius, notwithstanding all his defects, was capable of thinking justly and liberally, we shall refer the reader to an excellent passage, in which he strenuously asserts the right of private judgment in religion, and calls upon all men to employ their understandings in a free inquiry after truth. Vid. Instit. l. ii. c. 7. For a further account of the writings and opinions of Lactantius, see Lardner's *Credibility*, part ii. c. 65, ⁵¹ Instit. l. v. c. 20. ⁵² Lib. c. 2.

Evangelica, "Evangelical Preparation and Demonstration," both which have happily escaped the ravages of time. In providing materials for this work, Eusebius industriously extracted from ancient writings of every kind, whatever was suitable to his design; whence these pieces contain many fragments of books which have long since been lost. Had this celebrated writer been more free from prejudice; had he taken more care not to be imposed upon by spurious authorities; had he more clearly understood, from the leading principles of each sect, its peculiar language; had he distinguished the pure doctrine of Plato from that of the later Platonists; had he more accurately marked the points of difference between the tenets of the Sectarian philosophers and the doctrine of Christ, his works would have been much more valuable. With their present defects they should be read with caution; and particularly with a constant recollection of the partiality which Eusebius, with other Christian fathers of this and the preceding centuries, entertained for the Platonic doctrine on the ground already explained. Eusebius has also rendered great service, both to the Christian and the philosophical world, in his "*Eccelesiastical History*," his "*Chronicon*," his "*Refutation of Hierocles*," and other works.

Didymus, of Alexandria, a catechetical preceptor, though blind from his infancy, gained such an extensive and intimate acquaintance with philosophy, mathematics, and Greek literature, that he was esteemed a prodigy of learning. He was a pupil of Origen, and wrote in defence of his master; but his writings are lost. He flourished at the close of the fourth century.

Chalcidius,⁵³ the commentator upon the *Timæus* of Plato, has been ranked by many writers among the Christian fathers; but it is doubtful whether he was a convert to Christianity.

About the beginning of the fifth century flourished *Augustine*, who was born at Tagaste in Africa, in the year 354. After a course of grammatical study, he was introduced to the knowledge of philosophy at Carthage. In early youth he was more addicted to pleasure than to learning; but

⁵³ Conf. Mosheim de turbata per recent. Plat. Eccl. § 30. Deansobrie Hist. Manch. p. 1. p. 470. Cave Hist. Lit. Script. Eccl. p. 128.

when he became conversant with the writings of Cicero, they improved his taste, and inspired him, as he himself confesses, with an ardent thirst after wisdom. Not meeting with the satisfaction he wished from the Greek and Roman writers, he applied himself to the study of the Scriptures; but he was soon offended with the simplicity of their style, and threw them aside to return to his favourite orator. At the age of twenty years he became acquainted with the works of Aristotle; and the abstract notions of the Divine Nature which he collected from this philosopher, led him to adopt the Manichean doctrine of two independent principles, the one good, the other evil; thinking the latter a necessary substitute for Aristotle's principle of privation. At this time he so far receded from the Christian faith, as to be of opinion, that Jesus Christ was nothing more than a man of unparelled wisdom. By a vigorous exertion of his faculties in the study of philosophy, he at length discovered the futility of the Manichean system, and abandoned it. To escape the solicitations of Faustus, a leader of the Manicheans, he withdrew to Rome, where he undertook the profession of rhetoric. Still, however, he retained so much of his former system, as to ascribe his evil propensities to a distinct nature within him, and to conceive of the Deity as in some sense corporeal. In order to extricate himself from these errors, he now determined to take refuge in Academic uncertainty, and, abandoning philosophical and theological speculations, gave himself up entirely to the study of eloquence. His sceptical turn having created him many adversaries at Rome, he removed, by the advice of Symmachus, to Milan; where he opened a rhetorical school.⁵⁴

At Milan, Augustine, in the midst of his perplexing doubts, met with Ambrose, a Christian teacher of great probity and eloquence. By him he was instructed more accurately than he had before been, in the doctrines of Christianity, and brought back to the acknowledgment of the Christian faith. The way was prepared for his conversion by the perusal of the writings of some later Platonists,

⁵⁴ Confession, l. i. c. 9. n. 14. c. 13. n. 20, 21. l. ii. c. 3. n. 3. 5. 8. l. iii. c. 2. n. 6. c. 4. n. 8. c. 5. n. 9. c. 6. c. 7. n. 12. l. iv. c. 16. n. 28. l. v. c. 5. l. 1. tr. c. 2. n. 2. c. 3. n. 4. c. 15. n. 24. l. v. c. 3. n. 2. c. 5. 12.

which he found adapted to raise his conceptions above material objects to the contemplation of the Divine Nature as a pure mind, the fountain of all intelligence. Finding this doctrine fully confirmed, and other important truths clearly taught, in the Holy Scriptures, Augustine from that time devoted himself to the service of Christ, and returned to Africa, where he rose to great distinction in the church.⁵⁵ The particulars of his life, from this period, more properly belong to ecclesiastical than to philosophical history. He died in the year 430.

Although Augustine, after his establishment in the Christian faith, treated philosophy in general with contempt, he had, nevertheless, a strong attachment to the Platonic system, as accommodated to the system of emanation by the later Platonists.⁵⁶ This appears in many of his Christian tracts, particularly in the eighth book of his most learned and elegant work, *De Civitate Dei*, which treats of natural theology according to the doctrine of Plato. This partiality is, without question, to be ascribed to the cause, which has been repeatedly assigned for the same predilection in other Christian fathers, the prevailing opinion, that the truths which are found in Plato, on account of the source whence they were derived, are to be received as the dictates of Divine wisdom. This opinion, however, he afterwards saw reason to retract.⁵⁷

On the whole, it will not be denied by those who are acquainted with the writings of Augustine, that he was a great man, and an able defender of the Christian cause; but at the same time it must be acknowledged, that he laboured under the common prejudices of the times, and that these frequently betrayed him into absurd opinions, unsatisfactory reasonings, and fanciful interpretations of Scripture. A system of logic appears in the works of Augustine, which was afterwards commonly used in the schools through the Middle Age: it is more properly Stoic than Platonic.⁵⁸

Among the more eminent Christian Platonists of the fifth century was *Synesius*,⁵⁹ an African bishop. He is chiefly

⁵⁵ Conf. l. v. c. 14. De Utilit. Cred. p. 8. Conf. l. vii.

⁵⁶ Contra Acad. l. ii. c. 2. n. 4. 5. Conf. l. vii. c. 20, 21.

⁵⁷ Retractat. l. i. c. 1.

⁵⁸ Biblioth. Lat. Fabr. t. iii. p. 519.

⁵⁹ Evagrius, l. i. c. 15. Niceph. l. xiv. c. 15. Phot. Cod. 26. Suidas.

celebrated for his eloquence, an elegant specimen of which remains in his *Dion*, a treatise on the manner in which he instructed himself. He studied philosophy and mathematics at Alexandria, at the time when its schools were adorned with the female philosopher, Hypatia, and the eminent mathematicians, Theon, Pappus, and Hero. Under his female preceptor, upon whom he lavishes the highest praises, he became acquainted with Alexandrian Platonism. At an early age he acquired such distinction among his fellow-citizens, that he was sent upon an embassy to the Emperor Arcadius. Upon his return, through the influence of Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, he was engaged to take upon him the profession of Christianity; but his love of retirement and study long prevented him from accepting any ecclesiastical office. At last, however, he reluctantly complied with the intreaties of Theophilus, and took upon himself the episcopal charge of the city of Ptolemais. Synesius held opinions not perfectly consistent with the popular creed, as he himself candidly confesses in a letter to his brother: he rejected, particularly, the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. In his *Hymns* he adapts the Triad, or rather Quaternion, of the schools to the received Christian doctrine of the Trinity.⁶⁰ If the language of these mystical odes be compared with that of the Gnostics and Cabbalists, with the theology of Proclus, and the Zoroastrian Oracles, it will be easily seen, that Synesius was a more worthy disciple of Hypatia than of Jesus Christ.⁶¹

About this period flourished *Dionysius*, a writer falsely called *The Areopagite*,⁶² who has been ranked, without any sufficient evidence, among the Apostolic men. If the

⁶⁰ We subjoin the following specimen for the amusement of the learned reader:

Ἀσπλύντης ἀκροήτης
Ἐκτάσας καὶ τεκοῖσας
Ἵππευσίως λοχείαις
Ὅθεν αὐτὴ προβοῶσα
Διὰ πρωτοσπορον εἶδος
Μιὰς ἀρίστης χερδίσας
Τρικύμβων ἄχων ἀλλαν
Ἵππευσίως δὲ παρὰ
Στέφεται κάλλει παιδων
Ἀπὸ κέντρου τε θύροντων
Περὶ κέντρον τε βύθων.

⁶¹ Hymn iii. v. vi. Conf. Epistol. Synes.

Hymn i. v. 22, &c.

⁶² Suidas.

writings which bear this name be fairly compared with those of Proclus and Plotinus, little doubt will remain, that this pretended Dionysius did not write earlier than the fifth century; for his works abound with the mystical truths of the Plotinian school. Yet this fanatic found means to pass his productions upon the Christian world as of the Apostolic age, and hereby greatly contributed to foster an enthusiastic spirit both in the eastern and western churches.

The Christian philosophers hitherto noticed chiefly flourished in the eastern countries. In the western world, the irruptions of barbarous nations almost extinguished the remains of learning and science: whence, through several succeeding centuries, we meet with few names which deserve a place in the history of philosophy. Some stars, however, of considerable lustre, if not of the first magnitude, appeared to dissipate the darkness of this period.

The first of these, in order of time, is *Claudius Mamertus*,^a a learned presbyter of Vienna, who flourished about the year 460. He is celebrated for his eloquence and his general knowledge; and, particularly, for his acquaintance with the dialectics of Aristotle, which were made use of by the orthodox fathers, as weapons both offensive and defensive, against heretics. He wrote a treatise "On the State of the Soul."^b

At the beginning of the sixth century appeared a writer of great erudition and distinguished genius, *Anicius Manlius Torquatus Severinus Boethius*. He was born of a noble family at Rome, and was early sent to Athens to learn the Greek tongue, and to study philosophy. In the school of Proclus he became acquainted with the Eclectic system; and from the commendations which he bestows upon Porphyry, as the best interpreter of Aristotle, he seems to have united the Platonic with the Aristotelian doctrine. He translated the treatises of Aristotle and Porphyry on categories, and illustrated them with notes. But his most valuable work is his book, *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, "On the Consolation of Philosophy;" in which, after the Eclectic manner, he has blended, for the purpose of his work, the tenets of Plato, Zeno, and Aristotle, but without any notice of the sources of consolation which are

^a Siden. Ep. i. Alan. Encyclop. p. 341.

^b Ed. Barthii Cygn. 1686.

peculiar to the Christian system. In the elegant verses interspersed with this work, the intelligent reader will discover many traces of the Platonic philosophy, as it was then taught by Syrian, Proclus, and Marinus. Boethius wrote two treatises, *De Arithmetica*, "On Arithmetic;" five books; *De Unitate et Uno*, "On Unity and One;" *Institutio Musica*, "Institutes of Music," and other pieces.⁵⁵ He had formed a design of translating all the works of Plato and Aristotle into Latin, but was prevented from executing his purpose by a premature death. Having with great freedom censured the conduct of Theodoric, he was banished into Persia, and, after a short interval, beheaded. It was during his exile that he wrote, for the relief of his own mind, his Treatise on Consolation, which discovers an extent of learning and purity of taste worthy of a better age. Boethius died about the year 526.

Towards the close of the fifth century flourished *Aeneas Gaza*, a Pagan by birth, by profession a Sophist, a disciple of Hierocles, and, after his conversion, a Christian philosopher. His dialogue entitled *Theophrastus*, in which he maintains the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body, has rescued his name from oblivion. In this poem, although he professedly writes against the Platonists, the doctrines of Platonism and Christianity are confounded.⁵⁶

In the sixth century, *Zecharias*, surnamed the Scholastic, acquired some distinction among Christian philosophers. He was educated at Alexandria, and at length, for his learning and piety, was placed at the head of the church of Mitylene, in Lesbos. Gaza wrote a treatise against the Manichæans, "On the doctrine of Two Principles in Nature;" and a Dialogue against the Eternity of the World.⁵⁷ Another Christian philosopher, who wrote upon the same subject, against the disciples of Proclus, was *Joannes Philoponus*, a grammarian of Alexandria. He was more inclined to the Peripatetic than the Platonic system, and wrote commentaries upon Aristotle. Philoponus was pro-

⁵⁵ Fabr. Bib. Lat. t. i. p. 642. t. iii. p. 202.

⁵⁶ Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. i. p. 427. v. vii. p. 99. v. xiii. p. 458. 508.

⁵⁷ Cave Hist. Lit. Sc. Ecc. p. 227. Fabr. Syllab. Script. de Vir. Ch. R. p. 107.

ected by Amrum, the Saracen commander, in the year 640, when he was probably about eighty years of age; for he was patriarch of Constantinople under the emperor Justin II.⁶⁸

The last name which we shall add to this series of Christian fathers, who might be ranked among philosophers, is that of *Nemesius*,⁶⁹ whose age is uncertain, but is supposed by his editor⁷⁰ to have flourished about the close of the fourth century. He was the author of a treatise "On the Nature of Man," which is one of the most elegant specimens, now extant, of the philosophy which prevailed among the ancient Christians. The writer relates and examines the opinions of the Greek philosophers on the subject of his dissertation with great perspicuity of thought, and correctness of language. But the treatise is chiefly curious, as it discovers a degree of acquaintance with physiology, not to be paralleled in any other writers of this period. He treats clearly concerning the use of the bile, the spleen, the kidneys, and other glands of the human body, and seems to have had some idea of the circulation of the blood. In fine, though, on account of the uncertainty of his date, Nemesius is mentioned last in the present series, he merits a place of no inconsiderable distinction among the ancient Christian philosophers.*

⁶⁸ Fab. l. c. p. 108. et Bib. Gr. v. vii. p. 358. v. ix. p. 363. Phot. Cod. 218. 55. 75.

⁶⁹ Fabr. Syll. c. 2. § 30.

⁷⁰ Prof. Edit. Oxon. Conf. Friend's Hist. Physic.

* Vide ad. Cave's Lives of the Fathers, and Ecol. Antiq. Tensel. Exerc. Solent, p. i. p. 179. 210. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. v. p. 56. 81. 88. Fabric. Syllog. Script. de Ver. Christ. Rel. Longuerue de Tatiano ap. Orat. Ittig. de Hæresiar. xvi. ap. c. 12. Petav. Dogm. Theol. l. i. c. 3. Huët. Orig. l. ii. c. 2. 9. Ittig. select. cap. Hist. Ecc. s. ii. c. 3. Huët. de Fab. Rom. p. 83. Massuet. Diss. ad Frenæum. Whiston's Prim. Christ. p. iv. 123. 124. Deyling. de Iden. Test. Ver. § 42. Vine. Lirin. Commonit. c. 24. Baptes. Vit. Tertulliani. Barbeyrac de la Morale des Peres, c. 6. 8. Dupin. Bibl. Scr. Eccl. t. i. p. 104. Le Clerc. Bibl. Un. t. x. p. 175. 193. R. Montanous Orig. Eccl. l. ii. p. 52. Clerici Ep. Crit. l. p. 18. Oudin Viduat. Mel. i. Gaudenii Diss. de Compar. Dogm. Orig. etnii Dogm. Patristic. Phot. 1659. De la Rue Præf. Op. Orig. Cudworth's Intellectual System, w. s. iii. § 34. Journal de Scavans, 1734. May, Art. 4. Le Clerc. Rep. v. Histoire de Boët. Par. 1715. 12°. Tillemont. Mem. Ecol. t. xij. de Synesio, Baptes. Diss. de Phil. Synesii. Lardner's Account of the Christian Fathers in his Credibility of the Gospel History, Part ii. passim.

BOOK VII.

OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE CHRISTIANS IN THE MIDDLE AGE.

CHAP. I.

OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE GREEK CHRISTIANS, FROM
THE SEVENTH CENTURY TO THE TAKING OF CONSTAN-
TINOPLE BY THE TURKS.

HAVING related the philosophical history of the Ancient Christians, that is, of those who lived in the first six centuries of the Christian era, our plan requires that we proceed to inquire into the state of philosophy in the period of darkness called the *Middle Age*, which lasted from the beginning of the seventh century till the revival of letters in the fourteenth.

About the beginning of this period, under the Christian emperors, the Sectarian philosophy, together with Pagan superstition, was nearly extinct: and, in consequence of the irruption of the Northern Barbarians, almost the whole western world was overwhelmed with intellectual darkness. This part of the history of philosophy resembles a barren wilderness, where the traveller is fatigued with beholding dreary wastes, in which he meets with scarcely a single object to relieve his eye, or amuse his fancy. Yet, in order to preserve the connexion of facts, and account for the state of philosophy after the revival of letters, it will be necessary to trace with attention the great changes through which philosophy passed during this period. The order we shall observe will be, first to represent the state of philosophy in the East to the taking of Constantinople, when the eastern world ceased to philosophize, and the Greek philosophers passed over into the West; secondly, to relate

its condition in the western world from the seventh to the twelfth century; and lastly, to subjoin the history of the Scholastic Philosophy, which flourished from that time to the revival of letters.

The fate of the Platonic school having been already related, it is only necessary to remind the reader, that although the Pagan philosophers, who, in consequence of Justinian's interdict, had taken refuge in Persia under Chosroës, returned about the middle of the sixth century into the Roman empire,¹ the Eclectic sect, as such, did not long survive. Still, however, the spirit, and many of the tenets of this school, remained among the clergy of the Christian church, the generality of whom tenaciously adhered to opinions which, inconsistent as they were with the pure doctrine of Christianity, had been embraced and propagated by the Christian fathers. The followers of Origen, whose tenets were chiefly borrowed from the Alexandrian philosophy and theology, were particularly attached to this system. Of these the greater part were monks, who were induced, by a superstitious zeal for the rigorous discipline which he established, to profess his doctrine in the face of persecution. The enthusiastic spirit which was fostered by the writings of Origen, and by those of the supposed Dionysius already mentioned, established in the monasteries a mystical kind of theology, which was from this time embraced both in the eastern and western world.

From the commencement of the same period, the Aristotelian philosophy, which had for several past centuries languished, began to revive and flourish. In the early ages of the Christian church, the tenets of Aristotle being understood to militate strongly against the doctrines of Christianity, the Christian fathers had in general been exceedingly adverse to the Peripatetic sect. But, when the orthodox clergy saw the ingenious and successful use which many heretics made of the art of logic, they began by degrees to endure, and at length to admire and study, the dialectics of Aristotle, which were now translated into the Syriac language by Christians living under the Saracens. In the numerous contests which were at this time conducted

¹ Procopius in *Anecdosis*.

with as much acrimony among the several sects of Christians, each had recourse to these artificial methods of disputing. At a time when men were daily losing sight of common sense and simple truth, every champion for a system, whether orthodox or heretical, imagined that he rendered eminent service to the church, when he covered its supposed doctrines with the formidable redoubt of definitions and syllogisms. Thus the Aristotelian philosophy gradually rose into repute, till at length it so far triumphed over Platonism, that, whilst we only meet with a few individuals among the Greek Christians who were acquainted with the Platonic philosophy, great numbers studied and taught the Peripatetic. The more celebrated of these we shall distinctly mention.

The first who, after Philoponus, distinguished himself among the Greek Christians as an admirer, and, as far as was not wholly inconsistent with his Christian profession, a follower of Aristotle, was *Joannes Damascenus*. He flourished at the beginning of the eighth century. In early life he filled a high station in the court of the Saracen caliph; but afterwards retired to the monastery of St. Sabas, that he might be at leisure to prosecute his studies. With due allowance for the age in which he lived, he was a great master of mathematical and philosophical learning. The Arabians were much indebted to this Christian philosopher for their deliverance from barbarism. Among his writings are an explanation of dialectics, under the title of *Capita Philosophica*, "Heads of Philosophy;" "Dissertations on the Three Parts of the Soul, the Four Virtues, and the Five Faculties;" "Sacred Parallels;" and "An Accurate Delineation of the Orthodox Faith."² This latter work is, perhaps, the first attempt which was made to apply the language and arrangements of the Peripatetic philosophy to theology, and to form what has since been called, *A Body of Divinity*. Hence some have considered *Joannes Damascenus* as the father of the Scholastics. It is certain, that his example was afterwards followed by a long train of Christian writers. To him therefore ought, in some measure, to be ascribed the mischiefs which arose from the

² Op. Ed. à M. Le Quien. Par. 1712. 2 vol. fol. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. E. p. 777.

alliance which he introduced between Jesus Christ and Aristotle.

Under the eastern emperors, philosophy and learning, in the eighth century, seemed ready to expire. Besides the general torpor which appears to have at this time overspread the minds of men, the harassing incursion of the Arabians into the empire, and the spirit of barbarism which possessed the reigning princes, may be mentioned as causes of the general decay of knowledge. Zonaras relates a wonderful instance of ferocity in the emperor Leo, the Isaurian: that his librarian, and twelve other learned men, who lived in a royal college, and were supported at the public expense, having ventured, in a consultation upon some affair of state, to give their opinion in opposition to that of the emperor, the monster ordered the building where they slept to be set on fire, and the whole fraternity perished in the flames. If this story, through the known inaccuracy, and partiality of the writer, be somewhat doubtful, it is, however, certain, that this prince abolished many schools which had subsisted from the time of Constantine, and persecuted, with great severity, many learned men who were deemed heretics.

Succeeding emperors, however, probably excited by the example of the Saracen caliphs, formed a design of recalling philosophy, and reviving learning; and, by the help of a few able and industrious scholars, perhaps effected as much as the times would permit. Michael and Bardas, in particular, discovered an inclination to become patrons of letters: they instituted schools of various kinds, and appointed teachers with liberal salaries.*

The emperor Constantine Porphyrogenetes, by the encouragement which he gave to able preceptors, promoted the study of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and philosophy. This emperor was himself, in the ninth century, the pupil of an eminent scholar, *Michael Psellus*, whom, however, he afterwards suffered to be accused before him of apostacy from the Christian faith. Psellus, to wipe off this calumny, submitted, at an advanced age, to receive instruction in the Christian mysteries; after which he wrote many treatises, which are often erroneously ascribed to the

* Ann. t. lii. p. 123.

* Zonar. t. lii. p. 122.

younger Psellus. Among these is a dialogue "On the Operations of Demons," which breathes so much the spirit of the Platonic schools, as to render it highly improbable that it was written by a Peripatetic in the eleventh century.⁵

This Psellus had a disciple named *Leo*, who, for his singular attainments in philosophical learning, was called The Philosopher. He became an eminent preceptor in rhetoric, arithmetic, philosophy, and other sciences; first in the island of Andros, and afterwards at Constantinople. To increase his learning, he visited the libraries of many distant monasteries. One of his pupils being taken prisoner by the Saracens,⁶ astonished his victors by solving a problem which had perplexed the Saracen philosophers. Upon this, the caliph Al-Mamon, inquiring by whom he had been instructed, sent a messenger to his preceptor, to invite him to his court; but Leo, not thinking it safe to receive the letter, ordered it to be delivered to the emperor Theophilus, through the hands of his secretary. The emperor immediately rewarded Leo, and appointed him to the charge of a public school. After the death of Theophilus, Leo was dismissed from his office, because he was an enemy to the worshipping of images; but was afterwards restored to his honours by Barda, and appointed head of the professors of learning and science in Constantinople. Under the auspices of this Leo, who is not to be confounded with the sixth emperor of that name, literature revived.⁷

In this period, however, the chief place is unquestionably due to *Photius*, the learned patriarch of Constantinople, whose merit was equal to his fame. He excelled in grammatical learning, poetry, and eloquence, and was well acquainted with philosophy, medicine, and all the science of the age. A valuable proof of his erudition remains in his *Bibliotheca*, or "Literary Memoirs," containing extracts from various authors, with original remarks, which abundantly prove the writer's extensive learning and critical penetration.

This work is a valuable treasure, to which we are in-

⁵ Leo Allatius de Psellis, p. 2.

⁶ Zonaras, l. iii. p. 129. Scyliza Curopalates in Chronico.

⁷ Allatius l. c. p. v. Harekius de Byzant. Scrip. p. i. c. 26.

debted for our knowledge of many writings, particularly in philosophy, which would otherwise have been entirely lost. A man, furnished with such various learning, and endued with such superior talents, in an age of almost universal ignorance, must have been deemed a prodigy of wisdom. It is not therefore surprising, that he was advanced to the senatorial rank in the state, and to the highest dignity in the church. By the authority of Barda, Ignatius was deposed (whether justly or unjustly we shall not inquire) from the patriarchal see of Constantinople, and Photius was appointed in his room. In the next reign, this great man was, chiefly in consequence of theological disputes, dismissed from his station, and suffered severe persecutions; of which he esteemed it not the least, that, being deprived of his library, he was denied the consolation of reading. He was afterwards restored to the emperor's favour and his patriarchal honours, and was entrusted with the education of the young princes. Through the jealousy of the clergy and the intrigues of the court, Photius was, however, again in his old age deposed and banished.*

Leo the Sixth, the son of the emperor Basil, who himself assumed the purple in the year 889, acquired so much learning and wisdom under his illustrious preceptor, as to obtain a place among the philosophers of the age. In the language of eulogy, it was said,⁹ Ὁ δὲ φιλοσοφώτατος ἐν Βασιλεῦσι Λέων. Among princes, Leo was the greatest philosopher. But, after all, it is difficult to say, how far this emperor is indebted to his real merit, and how far to clerical adulation, for his fame. In the remains of his writings,¹⁰ he appears in no other light than that of a skilful astrologer.

Besides these principal restorers and patrons of learning and philosophy among the Greek Christians in the Middle Age, several other learned men came forth from the school of Leo the philosopher, whose names, in this dark period, must not be wholly omitted. These were *Nicetas David*,¹¹ a Paphlagonian, who at the close of the ninth century wrote a life of Saint Ignatius; *Michael of Ephesus*, known among

* Hanck. de Byz. Script. l. c. § 7. Nicetas in Vit. Ignatii. Fab. Bib. Gr. v. ix. p. 463. Phot. Ep. 97. 174.

⁹ Hanck. l. c. c. 23. Allat. p. 6. Zonar. t. iii. p. 141.

¹⁰ Fab. Bib. Gr. v. vi. p. 364. 431.

the Greek interpreters of Aristotle; *Magentius* of Mitylene, who wrote a Commentary on Aristotle's *Analytics*; *Eustratius*, who explained the dialectics and morals of Aristotle; *Nicephorus*, a rigid monk of the thirteenth century, who was the preceptor of Theodore Lascar, and wrote an *Epitome* of the Aristotelian Logic and Physics;¹¹ *Georgius Pachymerus*, a native of Nice, who lived in the thirteenth century, from whose manuscripts has been edited a compendium of Aristotelian philosophy;¹² *Theodore Metachita*,¹³ a Constantinopolitan of the fourteenth century, known among Aristotle's commentators; *Nicephorus Gregoras*, who wrote several philosophical works; *Georgius Cyprius*, celebrated for his acquaintance with Greek learning; and *Georgius Lapitha*, who is mentioned as a logician and an astronomer.¹⁴

To this list must be subjoined, as entitled to peculiar distinction, *Michael Psellus* the Younger, a learned Christian of the eleventh century, whose genius and industry raised him above the level of his age. He was by birth a Constantinopolitan, of consular rank, and flourished under the emperor Constantinus Monomachus. The female historian, Anna Comnena,¹⁵ speaks of him as one who had been more indebted for his attainments to his own excellent talents than to the instructions of his preceptors; and adds that, having made himself master of all the wisdom of the Greeks and the Chaldeans, he was justly esteemed the most learned man of the age. Thus furnished, he became the chief instructor of the Constantinopolitan youth. He was at the same time the companion and the preceptor of the emperor, who was so captivated by the studies and amusements in which Psellus engaged him, that, according to Zonaras, he neglected the concerns of the empire. The Byzantine historians complain, that the emperor, deluded by the head of the philosophers (the title with which Psellus was honoured) lost the world.¹⁶ Towards the close of his life, Psellus met with a powerful and successful rival in John of

¹¹ Ed. Aug. Vindob. 1696.

¹² Ed. Oxon. 1666. 8vo.

¹³ Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. ix. p. 215. 218.

¹⁴ Hanckel l. c. *Atlas de Psellus*. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. ii. p. 116. 180—152. v. ix. p. 365. v. vi. p. 300. 383. 466. 635. v. x. p. 666. Ann. Comnen. Alexiad. p. 463.

¹⁵ Alex. l. v.

¹⁶ Zonar. t. iiii. p. 127. Hanck. l. c. p. 483.

Italy, who, through the favour of Botaniatus Nicophonus, the successor of Michael, was invested with the honours which Psellus had enjoyed. Psellus retired into a monastery, and soon afterwards died. The time of his death is uncertain. His works, which have been much celebrated, are, "Commentaries upon Aristotle's Logic and Physics;" "A Compendium of Questions and Answers;" and "An Explanation of the Chaldean Oracles." The two latter works prove him to have been conversant, not only with Grecian, but with Oriental philosophy.

After the time of Psellus, the Greek empire declining, learning and philosophy were much neglected. There were, however, about the time when Constantinople was taken (which happened in the year 1451) several learned men among the Greek Christians, who merit a place in the annals of philosophy: but the confusion which at this time prevailed in the East, obliged them to quit their monasteries, and to seek for refuge in a more hospitable region. This circumstance occasioned the return of Grecian learning and philosophy into Europe; for, after the Greek empire was destroyed by the Turks, the friends of literature and science, despairing of meeting with protection and encouragement among barbarians, fled into Italy, and there, as we shall afterwards see, purchased an immortal name by the Revival of Letters.*

CHAP. II.

OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE WESTERN CHRISTIANS,
FROM THE SEVENTH TO THE TWELFTH CENTURY.

FROM the Christian philosophers of the East, during the Middle Age, we now pass to those of the West.

Upon a general survey of the facts which have been already collected, and are hereafter to be adduced, with respect to the state of philosophy in this obscure period,

* Vidend. Asseman. Bibl. Orient. Vatican. t. i. Heister. Bibl. Orient. a. iii. p. 291. et Hist. Eccl. Soc. viii. Hanck. de Byzant. Script.

There is one circumstance, which will appear too evident to be disputed, and which will deserve particular attention; namely, that both the Scholastic and the Mystic theology, which sprung up in this period, owed their rise and increase to the mixture of the dogmas of Pagan philosophy with the doctrines of Christianity. Although these two systems of theology differ in their leading characters; the former attempting to derive the confirmation of Divine truth from philosophy, the latter calling in its aid to support the spirit of fanaticism; the true origin of both will be found to have been, an injudicious application of the Peripatetic and Platonic philosophy to the illustration of theology. The seeds of the Scholastic theology were sown when the dialectics of Aristotle were first introduced into the controversies of the church; and the Mystical theology took its rise, when the enthusiastic notion of union with God, and other fanatical principles, taught by the Alexandrian philosophers, were embraced among Christians; and was established, when the spurious writings of the pretended Dionysius obtained credit and authority in the Christian world. From the Peripatetic school, Christians learned to perplex the truth by subtle disputations; and from that of the later Platonists, they received a powerful bias towards enthusiasm. Hence, with the professed design of exploring truth, they enveloped it in a cloud of obscure notions and subtle distinctions; and, under the pretence of producing sublime piety, enfeebled and enslaved the human mind by the extravagancies of Mysticism: in both ways, opposing the true spirit, and obstructing the natural operation, of Christianity.

From the time of Boethius, whose learning gleamed through the darkness which then overspread the western regions, ignorance so generally prevailed, that, at the beginning of the seventh century, a scholar, or philosopher, even of moderate attainments, was, in this part of the world, rarely to be found. This is, doubtless, in a great measure, to be ascribed to the barbarism of the northern conquerors, and to that depravity of manners which had long prevailed in the nations whom they had conquered. But the evil was greatly increased by the hostility which the emperor Justinian exercised against the whole race of

philosophers. His inveterate aversion to those who still continued to profess the Pagan religion, induced him to shut up the schools of philosophy which still remained at Athens; and to deprive the professors of the salaries which former princes had appointed. Whilst some of the chief supplies of learning were thus cut off, the general prevalence of barbarous manners rendered it unsafe to travel in search of knowledge. The intercourse between the eastern and western countries becoming on this account less frequent, the Greek language fell into neglect in the West; so that, in a short time, scarcely any one in this part of the world was capable of reading the ancient Greek authors, and those who were desirous of reading the works of Aristotle or Plato, were obliged to content themselves with imperfect Latin translations. The political spirit of the times, too, was exceedingly unfavourable to learning. At a period when the natural ardour of the human mind is damped by tyranny, it is scarcely possible that it should exert itself with vigour in the pursuits of science. Add to this, that the Barbarian princes, who took more delight in arms than letters, were little inclined to afford encouragement and patronage to philosophers.

These were great evils. But a still more fruitful source of ignorance and barbarism remains to be mentioned, namely, the general prevalence of a superstitious and bigoted contempt of philosophy. The mischiefs which sprang from this source were so extensive and lasting, that we must give it a distinct consideration, and endeavour to account for its existence.

About the beginning of the second century, astrologers, Chaldeans, and other diviners, disgraced the profession of philosophy by assuming the title of mathematicians. By this name they were commonly known, and this signification of the term was in general use for several centuries. In the Justinian code we find a chapter under this title,¹ *De Maleficis et Mathematicis*, "On Sorcerers and Mathematicians;" and one book of the *Theodosian Code* prescribes the banishment of mathematicians out of Rome,

¹ L. x. Tit. 18. Conf. Noctes Attic. l. i. c. 9. Sext. Emp. adv. Math. l. iv. § ult. l. v. § 2. Euseb. Prep. l. vi. c. 1. Suet. Tib. c. 14. 26.

and all the Roman cities, and the burning of their books. Impostors, who passed under this appellation, rendered themselves exceedingly obnoxious to princes and statesmen by the influence which their arts gave them over the minds of the vulgar; and it was thought necessary, for the safety of the state, to subject them to rigorous penalties.² This aversion to mathematicians or diviners, passed the more easily from the Pagans to the Christians, as it was a general persuasion among the latter, that a disposition to pry into futurity was culpable, and even impious. Hence, not only were books written against the practice of divination, but bishops from their councils and synods issued statutes and canons against those who followed the arts of divination, or magic; and, in their popular discourses, dissuaded the people from hearkening to them. The thirty-sixth canon of the council of Laodicea orders them to be banished.³ Gregory, bishop of Rome, whose negative merit obtained him the surname of Great, adopted this decree.⁴ And thus far, perhaps, the conduct of the clergy, as guardians of religion, might admit of some apology; but this ignorant bigot proceeded much further. Inflamed with blind zeal against every thing that was Pagan, Gregory gave orders that the library of the Palatine Apollo, a valuable collection of books formed by the Roman emperors, and kept in the temple of Apollo adjoining to the palace, should be committed to the flames.⁵ This order, so disgraceful to the episcopal chair, and of such irreparable injury to posterity, was issued under the notion of confining the attention of the clergy to the sacred Scriptures. This story, which we relate on respectable authority, is the more credible, as it perfectly agrees with the spirit of this ignorant pontiff, who despised all profane learning as unworthy of a Christian. Of this we have a curious proof in his letter to a teacher of grammar, reproving him for polluting, with hymns to Jupiter, that tongue, which ought to be employed in celebrating the praises of Christ, and exhorting him to desist from the vain pursuit of human

² Fabrotius ad. t. 10. l. 16. Cod. Theod. de Pagan. p. 37. Jul. Firmic. Math. l. i. c. 7.

³ In Photii Nomocan. Tit. ix. c. 25.

⁴ Sarisberiens. Policrat. l. i. c. 9.

⁵ Ib. l. ii. c. 26. l. viii. c. 19.

learning.⁶ It is easy to perceive, that the authority of this renowned prelate, whose singular sanctity procured him a degree of veneration among the vulgar little short of idolatry, would not fail to create a general prejudice against learning of every kind. And no one, who reflects how easily the ignorant vulgar are led wherever their teachers please, will be surprised, that, from this time, men regarded as *profane* every study which was not sanctified by the authority of the church; and thought that they made an acceptable offering to the Lord, when they consigned to the flames the valuable remains of Greek and Roman literature.

What reparation did this zealous guardian of the purity of Christian doctrine make, for the depredations which he committed upon ancient learning? Did he provide precepts of wisdom more consonant to sacred truth, or more suitable to Christian piety? This his vanity prompted him to undertake; and this his ignorant and servile followers, for several centuries, imagined that he had accomplished! From a bigoted contempt of heathen morality, he thought it necessary to furnish the church with a pure system of Christian ethics, and drew up his celebrated *Book of Morals*. And such was the opinion which was entertained of his piety and learning, and such the reverence which was paid to his authority, that the work was received with universal admiration. About forty years after his death, in the pontificate of Theodore, whilst a council was sitting at Toledo, the king of Spain sent a bishop to Rome, to request from the pontiff a copy of Pope Gregory's *Morals*. The pope detained the messenger three days, pretending that the book could not be found; the bishop passed the third night in prayer in the church of Peter and Paul, and in the morning reported, that about the middle of the night he had a vision of those heavenly apostles, who informed him of the place in which this sacred book lay concealed. The book was accordingly found, and delivered to him by the hands of the pontiff.⁷ This bishop, whose name was Taio, afterwards collected from these writings of Gregory, four books of sentences, which at this day sleep in libra-

⁶ Sarisberiens. Policrat. l. ii. c. 29. l. ix. Ep. 46.

⁷ Anon. in app. ad. Conc. Tolet. vii.

rise, without much injury to the learned world; and the same task was repeated by three different ecclesiastics in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries. So long did the *Morals* of Gregory retain their credit and authority in the church. Notwithstanding all this, no one who now examines this famous production will hesitate to pronounce the book a confused mass of superstitious trifles and mystical absurdities; such as might have been expected from a writer, who, in the dedication of his work, expressly disclaims all attention to style, and even to grammar, judging it unworthy of a Christian bishop "to restrict the words of celestial wisdom by the rules of Donatus."

In the midst of all the discouragements, which were at this period cast in the way of letters by those from whom it ought to have received support and patronage, there were, however, a few who ventured to converse with authors that treated on subjects of human learning and philosophy. These authors, who were called *Secular Writers*, and may be considered as the classics of the Middle Age, were *Marcianus Capella*, of Madaura in Africa, who, in the fifth century, wrote *Novem Librorum Satyra*, a work which, without perspicuity or elegance, treats of grammar, dialectics, geometry, rhetoric, arithmetic, astrology, and music;—*Boethius*, the author of the book *De Consolatione*, concerning whom it is difficult to say, whether he owed his authority more to his knowledge of the Grecian language, or to the intimate friendship which is said to have subsisted between him and Saint Bernard;—*Aurelius Cassiodorus*, who wrote a treatise on the seven branches of learning, eagerly read by the *learned men* of these times;—*Macrobius*, a writer already noticed, whose erudition and perspicuity made him exceedingly valuable to these schools;—*Firmicus Maternus*, whose treatise *De Mathematicis*, or *Astrologia Apotelesmatica*, was much valued;—and *Chalcidius*, whose Commentary upon the *Timæus* of Plato afforded great scope for the profound speculations of the philosophers of the Middle Age.⁸

⁸ Fabr. Bib. Lat. tom. i. p. 638. 644. 651. tom. iii. p. 185. 209. 218. t. iii. p. 97. 146. Saisib. Policrat. l. ii. c. 19. l. viii. c. 10. Trithem. de S. B. c. 201. Cassiod. Op. Ed. Rothomag. 1676. Metalog. l. iv. c. 9. p. 890.

With such guides, it was impossible for those who, in this period of blind superstition, dared to turn their eyes towards profane literature and science, to make any considerable proficiency in knowledge. Many of the writers, whom we have mentioned as the classical authors of this age, do not professedly deliver precepts of liberal arts, or elements of philosophical science, but intersperse them with subjects of a different kind; while others are employed in recondite speculations, the result of the most profound study of philosophy. In order to understand and profit by either of these classes of preceptors, it is evident that the pupil must have acquired a much larger share of preparatory knowledge, than could be commonly attained at a period, when genius was neglected, and the ancients were almost unknown.

Besides the profane or secular writers above mentioned, the scholars of this age chose for their oracle and guide the pious and learned St. Augustine,⁹ who was so great a master of the dialectic art, that in a dispute which he held with Ambrose, he obliged that Saint to have recourse to his prayers, that he might not be caught in the web of Augustine's sophistry.¹⁰ A summary of the precepts of logic, and an explanation of the Categories, introduced into the schools under the name of Augustine, were esteemed invaluable treasures of philosophical learning, and were used as the chief text books in public lectures;¹¹ till at length the sagacity of the Benedictine monks, who edited the works of Augustine, saw reason to reject them as spurious, because the dialectics which he wrote were, as he himself attests, written upon Pythagoric and Platonic principles, whereas the pupil's manual taught the dialectics of the Stoics; and because the book of Categories asserted the existence of antipodes, which Augustine had denied.¹² Yet these spurious books obtained, and for some centuries preserved, the highest credit in the schools.

If the poverty of these sources of instruction be compared with other unfavourable circumstances of the times, it will not be thought surprising, that the seventh century

⁹ Barbeyrac de Phil. Mor. Patr. Præf. p. 39.

¹⁰ Amb. Sermon. 92.

¹¹ Launojus de Scholis cel. c. 59. art. 1. p. 178. Id. de Fort. Arist. c. 5. p. 197.

¹² De Civit. Dei, l. xvi. c. 9.

afforded no writers of distinction; though, doubtless, there were, even at this period, men who in less disadvantageous situations would have risen to eminence in philosophy. This would, probably, have been the case with Isidore, archbishop of Seville, who attained that dignity in 595, and died in 636. He appears to have been a man of considerable reading, and his writings are valuable for the numerous extracts they contain from Latin books which are now lost. His principal works are, his *Origines*, "Derivations," which is not merely an etymological work, but treats on many miscellaneous topics in mathematics and physics; and his book "On the Nature of Things," which contains many fragments of Nigidius, Varro, Suetonius, and others. The works of Isidore were of great use in the subsequent ages, in which the ancients were little read.

In the eighth century, learning and philosophy, which had as we have seen nearly expired in the East, were in the West so far from reviving, that they seemed in danger of being entirely lost. Of the state of knowledge at this period some judgment may be formed from the eighth canon of the council of Toledo, which required, that every clergyman should be able to read and chaunt the psalter, and to perform the ceremony of baptism. The best singer was at this time reckoned the most accomplished priest. In the reign of Charlemagne, a violent dispute arose between the singers at Rome and those in France, concerning the merit of their respective performances, which was brought before the emperor, and decided in favour of the Romans, who had been instructed by Pope Gregory. The Roman singers valued themselves so highly upon this circumstance, that in the course of this controversy they did not scruple to call their Gallic brethren ignorant rustics and brutes.¹³ The attention which was at this time universally paid to music, contributed greatly towards establishing the dominion of barbarism; for whilst the ecclesiastics were chiefly occupied in this pursuit, learning and philosophy, through the whole western world, were forgotten. Ignorance and indolence, cherished by this passion for music, prevailed to such a degree, that those who were ambitious to obtain some reputation as

¹³ Launois de Schol. cel. c. i. p. 3.

philosophers, looked no further than that part of philosophy which treats of music, and wasted their time in writing books upon the art of chaunting and singing.¹⁴

The credit of affording an asylum to philosophy and learning, at a time when they seem to have been banished from courts and cities, is commonly given to monastic institutions. And the monks of St. Benedict, in particular, have obtained much praise as the first patrons of letters. But the world is less indebted to this order than is commonly supposed. Benedict himself was an enemy to learning. Though his education had introduced him to the knowledge of letters, he voluntarily relinquished all profane literature, and, desirous to please God alone, devoted himself to a monastic life, *scienter nescius, et sapienter indoctus*, knowingly ignorant, and wisely unlearned.¹⁵ The candidates for admission into this order were indeed required to receive preparatory instructions, and for this purpose schools were erected; but it does not appear, that any provision was made in these schools for study of any kind, either secular or sacred; the candidates seem to have been wholly employed, either in manual labour, or in such religious exercises as were judged necessary to form them to habits of piety and sanctity. And the case was the same with respect to other celebrated monastic institutions.¹⁶ The truth, therefore, seems to be, that there was no direct establishment in these societies for the encouragement and propagation of learning; but that a long course of leisure and retirement naturally led the monks to seek relief from the fatigue of absolute inaction in speculation and study; and that in this manner monasteries gradually became seats of learning. This good end was probably promoted by Cassiodorus, who about this time wrote *Institutiones Divinae et Humanae*, "Lectures on Subjects of Divine and Human Learning," for the use of his own monks.

At this period, when the Lombards and other barba-

¹⁴ Fabric. Bibliogr. Antiq. c. xi. p. 368. Id. Bib. Lat. Med. t. i. p. 644.

¹⁵ Anton. Summa Histor. Tit. xv. c. 13. Conring. Acad. Ant. Diss. iii. Id. Suppl. 30.

¹⁶ Baillet. Vit. nov. SS. Basnage Hist. Eccl. l. xxi. c. 4. t. iv. p. 1621, Holsten. Cod. Regul. Rom. 1661. G. Naud. Conject. Caus. Kempens. p. 156.

rians had established the empire of ignorance in Italy, and the Saracens had, by the terror of their arms, dispersed the small remains of learning in Spain and France, Philosophy, now so disguised as scarcely to be known, and the Muses, with their lyres now almost unstrung, could find no other secure retreat than in the islands of Great Britain and Ireland.¹⁷ Several schools of learning were at this time established in Ireland, to which the English sent their children for education; and from these nurseries many scholars returned to England, and obtained great reputation. It is probable, that the British youth were sent to the Irish schools to study philosophy; for Eric says,¹⁸ "What shall I say of Ireland, who, despising the dangers of the sea, is migrating to our coasts with almost her whole train of philosophers?" England seems to have been much indebted to Ireland for the learned men whose names distinguished this period of her history.

One of the most celebrated scholars of this age was *Theodore Cilix*, of Tarsus, a monk, who about the middle of the seventh century was created archbishop of Canterbury by Pope Vitalian. He brought into England a large collection of Greek and Latin books, and being himself a tolerable proficient in the metrical art, in astronomy, in ecclesiastical calculations, and in music, he instructed others in these branches of learning. His successors, *Berechtwald*, *Tobias* bishop of Rochester, *Aldhelm* of Sherborne, and others, made some efforts towards the advancement of knowledge.¹⁹ But this feeble light could do little towards the dispersion of the Cimmerian darkness which had overspread the world. Notwithstanding their laudable exertions, *Bede*, one of the greatest lights of the eighth century, speaks of it as a fact not to be observed without tears, that the church was continually becoming weaker and more corrupt.²⁰

The *Venerable Bede*²¹ was born in 672, or 673, at Jarrow,

¹⁷ *Bulgeri vet. Blog. apud Camden.*

¹⁸ *In Vit. S. Germani. Conf. Alouin in Vit. Willibrord.*

¹⁹ *H. Spelman. ad A. C. 668. t. i. p. 152. Cave. p. 387. Oudin. de Scr. Ec. t. i. p. 1655. Bede Hist. Ang. l. iv. c. 1. 2. Conring. l. c. p. 286.*

²⁰ *Expos. Alleg. in Sam. l. iv. c. 2. Bede Hist. Cent. l. i. c. 8.*

²¹ *Bed. Op. t. iii. p. 151.*

in Durham, acquired the elements of learning in the monastery of Saint Peter, and was ordained a priest by John of Beverley, bishop of Horgulstad, or Hexham. Though the fame of his learning obtained him an invitation from Pope Sergius, he chose to remain in his monastery, and prosecute his studies. He wrote many books, of which the most valuable is his Ecclesiastical History. Bede had great merit, not only in the diligence with which he studied both sacred and profane literature, in an age so unfavourable to learning, but in the pains which he took to disseminate knowledge. He was conversant with the writings of the ancients, and drew from these pure fountains his knowledge of mathematics, physics, and philosophy. His erudition so far exceeded that of the generality of his contemporaries, that they set no bounds to their admiration. His writings became the chief guide of youth in their academical studies, and furnished popular discourses, which, under the authority of the bishops, were read by the clergy to the people. On these accounts he obtained the appellation of the Venerable Bede.²² And it cannot be doubted that his industry was indefatigable, and that, considering the disadvantages under which he laboured, his attainments were great; but, either he wanted that strength of judgment, without which a great philosopher can never be formed, or the errors and prejudices of his age were obstacles in his way, which he had not vigour of mind sufficient to overcome. His philosophical works are, for the most part, compilations from former writings, which contributed little towards the improvement of science, and which, in the present advanced state of knowledge, will scarcely repay the trouble of perusal. Bede died about the year 735.

Another Englishman of great distinction at this period was *Alcuin*, a pupil of *Egbert*, archbishop of York. Under his preceptor, who was an eminent patron of learning, and himself a learned man, he acquired the knowledge not only of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, but of mathematical and philosophical science. After the Venerable Bede, he became an eminent teacher both of lan-

²² Oudin. de S. E. t. i. p. 1672. Fab. Bib. Lat. Med. t. i. p. 496. Bal. Script. Ang. Cent. i. p. 84. Fuller. Præf. ad Res Angl. ap. Blount. Cens. p. 340.

languages and sciences in the University of Cambridge. Charlemagne, hearing of his fame, invited him, in the year 793, to his court, and admitted him to his confidence. It was, probably, through the advice and direction of this learned man that Charlemagne founded many schools in France, Germany, and Italy. After acquiring just fame for the services he had rendered to learning, he died at an advanced age in the year 804.²³

But neither the learning of Alcuin, nor the authority of Bede, nor the power of Charlemagne, could subdue the ferocity and barbarism of the times. Even in the most celebrated schools of this age, the field of instruction was confined and barren. In philosophy, nothing was studied but mathematics and logic; and the latter was taught in a trifling and useless manner, from the book before-mentioned, attributed to Augustine. Neither preceptor nor pupil was at this time to be found, who desired, or dared to attempt, greater things. The circle of instruction, or the Liberal Arts, as the term was then understood, consisted of two branches, the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*: the *trivium* included Grammar, Rhetoric, and Dialectics; the *quadrivium* comprehended Music, Arithmetic, Geometry, and Astronomy. The respective objects of these seven liberal arts are, after the manner of the times, thus quaintly expressed in two memorable verses:

Gramm. loquitur, Dia. vera docet, Rhet. verba colorat;
Mus. canit, Ar. numerat, Geo. ponderat, Ast. colit astra.

These seven heads were supposed to include universal knowledge. He who was master of these was thought to have no need of a preceptor to explain any books, or to solve any questions which lay within the compass of human reason; the knowledge of the *trivium* having furnished him with the key to all language, and that of the *quadrivium* having opened to him the secret laws of nature.²⁴

At a period when few were instructed in the *trivium*, and very few studied the *quadrivium*, to be master of both was sufficient to complete the character of a philosopher.

²³ Pagi ad A. C. 796. n. 22. Mabillon, Sec. iv. Bened. p. 1. Laun. l. c. p. 15. 31. Coming. Ant. Ac. Diss. iii. p. 75. Alcuin. Op. Par. 1612. B.M. Cent. i. p. 110. ²⁴ Fabr. Bib. Lat. Med. t. i. p. 134.

²⁴ J. Sarisber. Metalog. l. i. c. 12.

When physics were almost entirely neglected; when morals were only taught in wretched compilations, after the model of Pope Gregory's *Moralia*; and when Cassiodorus, Capella, Isidore, and Augustine, supplied the place of the ancients, how wretched must have been the state of knowledge! especially when it is added, that the liberal arts were only taught in monasteries, and scarcely ever studied by any but the clergy, who were thought sufficiently learned, if, besides an acquaintance with church music, they were tolerable masters of the *trivium*. Beyond the precincts of the cloisters and schools, the name of learning was scarcely known; military exploits were the business, and gross luxury the amusement of the nobles; the inferior laity were sunk in extreme indolence, and never dreamed of requiring a reason for their religious belief or prejudices; and the clergy and monks had no desire to awaken that spirit of inquiry, which is so hostile to superstition and spiritual tyranny.

Through the ninth century, notwithstanding the efforts which were made for the revival of learning, about its commencement under the auspices of Charlemagne, ignorance and barbarism were still predominant. Nothing contributed more to that general contempt and neglect of learning, which so strongly characterizes this period, than the shameful depravity of the clergy, of the enormity of whose vices the synodical statutes and canons, as well as the history of these times, afford abundant proofs. Though many schools were erected, and though some of these produced men whose names deserve a place in the history of literature and philosophy, the united efforts of the few, who at this period wished well to the cause of learning, were unable to counteract the powerful operation of that indolent and licentious spirit which prevailed among the ecclesiastics.

In England indeed, **Alfred*,²⁵ for his superior wisdom and merit justly styled The Great, did every thing which, at such a period, it was possible for example and authority to effect, towards reviving the love of learning and philo-

²⁵ Leland, c. 115. Life of Alf. Ed. Lond. 1574. Conf. Cambden, Cave. Oudin. Fabr. Bib. Lat. Med. t. i. p. 69. Brit. Twyn. Apol. Ant. Oxon. T. Caius Vind. Ant. Ox.

sophy. In the midst of all the cares of his busy and troublesome reign, he is said to have devoted eight hours of every day to study and devotion. By this persevering application, he made such proficiency in the knowledge of grammar, rhetoric, philosophy, history, mathematics, and poetry, that he had, among his contemporaries, in point of learning, few equals, and no superiors. His writings, among which was a Saxon translation of Boethius *De Consolatione*, are a sufficient proof of his learning. At the same time that he encouraged letters by his example, he made use of every means in his power to banish barbarism from his kingdom. He invited learned men from all countries to reside in Britain, and made ample provision for their support in the capacity of public professors. He founded the University of Oxford, so celebrated in academical history from that time to the present day; and instituted professorships in grammar, rhetoric, philosophy, and theology. In the execution of this laudable design, he was much assisted by Neot, a monk. Ingulf, abbot of Croyland, speaking of Alfred, says,²⁶ "he was so assiduous in sacred reading, that he always carried in his bosom a psalter, or some other edifying book; and he invited learned foreigners to his palace, to assist him in his studies, and afterwards bestowed upon them ecclesiastical honours. Grimbald, who was famous for his knowledge of the Scriptures, and his skill in church music, he sent for from France, and appointed him abbot of the new monastery which he had erected at Winchester. Joannes Scotus, an eminent philosopher, he appointed abbot of the monastery of Atheling; and other men of distinguished learning he advanced to the higher stations in the church."²⁷ But these meritorious efforts for the restoration of science and learning were soon rendered abortive by the incursions of the Danes, and the subsequent cruelties of Harold, which overwhelmed the whole country, not excepting the schools, in confusion and calamity. From this time, to the Norman conquest in the eleventh century, knowledge in England was at so low an ebb, that, according to William of Malmesbury,²⁸ both sacred and profane learning were be-

²⁶ Hist. Croyland. ap. Oudin. l. c. p. 312.

²⁷ Conf. Polydor. Virgil. de Invent. Rer. c. 71.

²⁸ L. iii. Conf. Matt. Westmonast. Chron. Ann. 839.

come obsolete, and the clergy were scarcely able to stammer out the words of the sacrament; and he who understood grammar was admired by the rest as a prodigy of learning.

We must not omit to mention, among the learned men of this century, *Rabanus Maurus*,²⁹ pupil of Alcuin, and afterwards a preceptor in the monastery of Fulda, in Hesse. It was his custom, and that of his colleagues, not only to instruct their pupils in theology, but in every kind of literature and science; for "these learned men thought, that no one could understand the Scriptures, who was unacquainted with human learning."³⁰ Rabanus acquired so high a reputation for knowledge and piety through all Germany and France, that many of the nobility entrusted him with the education of their sons. In the year 847, he was advanced to the see of Mentz.³¹

But the first place among the scholars of this age is certainly due to *Joannes Scotus*, surnamed *Erigena*. He is said by some writers to have been a native of the town of Aire in Scotland, and by others to have been born in Herefordshire. For his profound knowledge of philosophy he obtained, among the writers of the Middle Age, the appellation of Scotus the Wise. Having early acquired (by what means is not certainly known) an uncommon stock of erudition, he penetrated further than any of his contemporaries into the mysteries of the Grecian, and especially the Alexandrian, philosophy. The fame of his learning reached Charles the Bald, who invited him into France, admitted him to his intimacy, and gave him the direction of the university of Paris. But a circumstance soon afterwards arose, which brought upon him much obloquy and persecution. The Greek emperor, Michael the Stammerer, had, in the year 824, sent over, as a present of inestimable value to the western emperor, Lewis the Mild, the treatises of the supposed Dionysius, the Areopagite, which had long been held in great veneration among the Greek Christians. This book, Charles the Bald, who could not read Greek, was earnestly desirous of perusing in a Latin translation. This desire was doubtless increased by the opinion which at this time universally prevailed, though without any

²⁹ Laun. c. 8. Pagi Crit. Antib. ad A. 814. n. 28. Mabill. Sec. iv. Ben. p. 1.

³⁰ Trithem. Chron. Hirs. An. 813.

³¹ Trithem. de S. F. c. 247.

proof, that Dionysius, the Areopagite, or St. Denys, was the first Christian teacher or apostle in France. At the request of the emperor, Joannes Scotus undertook the task of translating the books of this Dionysius, "On the Celestial Monarchy;" "On the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy;" "On Divine Names;" and "On Mystic Theology." These books were received with great eagerness by the western churches. The translation, however, being made without the pope's licence, and containing many things contrary to the received faith of the church of Rome, the pope, Nicholas the First, was highly displeased, and wrote a threatening letter to the emperor, requiring that Scotus should be banished from the University of Paris, and sent to Rome. The emperor had too much respect for Scotus to obey the pope's order; but Scotus thought it advisable, for his safety, to retire from Paris, and after the death of the emperor is said to have returned into England.*

It was the translation of this book which revived the knowledge of Alexandrian Platonism in the West, and laid the foundation of the mystical system of theology which afterwards so generally prevailed. Thus philosophical enthusiasm, born in the East, nourished by Plato, educated in Alexandria, matured in Asia, and adopted into the Greek church, found its way, under the pretext and authority of an apostolic name, into the western church, and there produced innumerable mischiefs.

Erigena was expert in metaphysical subtleties, and applied them to the elucidation of theological tenets. He wrote a book "On the Nature of Things," which Gale disturbed in its quiet repose, and published under the title of *Joanni Scoti Erigena de Divisione Naturæ Libri quinque, dis desiderati*,† "Five Books of J. Sc. Erigena, long wished for, on the Division of Nature." At the entrance of the work, he divides nature into that which creates and is not created; that which is created and creates; that which is created and does not create; and that which neither creates nor is created. If the reader wishes for any further spec-

* Fordun. l. iv. c. 19. Chron. Scot. Ed. Galæi. Conrig. Ant. Ac, Supp. 31. G. Malmshur. de Gest. Reg. Ang. l. ii. c. 4. S. Dunelm. Recapit. ad A. C. 882. Mat. Westm. Flor. Hist. ad A. 883. Reger Flovenden. Ann. ad 883. Mabillon. l. c.

† Oxon. 1681. fol.

man of the singularity of Jeannes Scotus, let him attend to the following argument for the eternity of the world:³² "Nothing can be an accident with respect to God; consequently, it was not an accident with respect to him to frame the world: therefore God did not exist before he created the world; for if he had, it would have happened to him to create; that is, creation would have been an accident of the Divine Nature. God therefore precedes the world, not in the order of time, but of causality. The cause always was, and is, and will be, and therefore the effect always has subsisted, doth subsist, and will subsist; that is, the universe is eternal in its cause." Hence he taught that God is all things, and that all things are God; by which he probably meant the same with the Oriental, Cabbalistic, and Alexandrian philosophers, and, after these, with the followers of Origen, Synesius, and the supposed Dionysius, that all things have eternally proceeded by emanation from God, and will at length return into him as streams to their source. Accordingly he says, that after the resurrection nature itself will return to God; God will be all in all, and there will remain nothing but God alone.³³

These brief specimens are sufficient to shew that the philosophy of Erigena was founded in the enthusiastical notions of universal deification; and consequently, that he is rather to be ranked among the fanatical than among the atheistical philosophers. By introducing into the western church the books of the supposed Dionysius, he sowed the seeds of that mystical theology, which afterwards spread through the church, and which has not to this day been entirely eradicated. The monastic life, which afforded so much leisure for indulging the flights of imagination, and so many opportunities for an ostentatious display of piety, was peculiarly favourable to the propagation of enthusiasm; and the ignorance of the times made it perfectly easy for those who were inclined to practise upon vulgar credulity, to execute their design. It is no wonder, therefore, that the dreams of Mysticism were, under the authority of a supposed apostolical name, extensively propagated. But we shall have occasion to treat of this subject more fully in another place; it may suffice for the present to have shewn,

³² Ib. l. iii. p. 186.

³³ P. 232.

by what channel the stream of enthusiasm, which Origen and other fathers brought into the eastern church, passed over to the West.

Besides the learned men who have already been mentioned, the ninth century produced a few others whose names should not be omitted. *Eginhart*,³⁶ secretary to the emperor Charlemagne, had philosophy sufficient to be capable of correcting the terrors of Charlemagne, when, upon the appearance of a comet, that emperor inquired of him, what fatal change this phenomenon portended, by quoting the words of the prophet: "Be not thou afraid of the signs of heaven." He wrote the life of Charlemagne, in a style superior to the general taste of the age.³⁷ *Hincmar*, archbishop of Rheims, distinguished himself by the zeal and ingenuity with which he maintained the controversy of the times concerning predestination, and by his attention to moral philosophy. He wrote treatises, "On the Character and Office of a King;" "On Virtues and Vices;" and "On the different Faculties of the Mind;" which were chiefly designed to correct the manners of the age in which he lived.³⁸ *Paul Winfrid*,³⁹ a monk of Cassel, was, for his learning and ability, much esteemed by Charlemagne: he studied not only theology, but history, poetry, and philosophy. *Agobard*,⁴⁰ bishop of Lyons, in the midst of the general neglect of physical study, wrote a treatise on hail and thunder, in which he endeavoured to correct the absurd suppositions of the vulgar; and another, in which he inquired into the natural causes of an epidemic epilepsy. *Grimbald*, invited from France to England by Alfred, greatly promoted the study of letters in England. *Eric*,⁴¹ a monk of Auxerre, was preceptor to Lotharius, the son of the emperor Charles the Bald. He appears from his writings to have been better acquainted with the Greek and Latin tongues than most of his contemporaries, and to have been capable of producing, from his own stores, more useful works than his *Collectanea*, which, after the bad taste of

³⁶ Mabillon. Sec. iv. Baned. p. i.

³⁷ Ed. Schmink. Traj. ad Rhen. 1711. 4to. Epist. Eginh. Ed. Weinek. Frank. 1707.

³⁸ Trithem. c. 264.

³⁹ Pet. Diacon. de Illust. Vir. Casin. c. 8.

⁴⁰ Cave Hist. L. p. 438. Dom. de Colon. Hist. Lit. de Lyon. t. ii. p. 93.

⁴¹ Fabr. l. c. t. ii. p. 327. Mabill. Ann. t. i. p. 422.

the age, is a collection of scraps from Bede, Augustine, Jerome, and others.

The feeble exertions of these and other learned men, in the schools and monasteries which were dispersed through the western world, were wholly insufficient to destroy the empire of barbarism, at a period when public affairs, and private manners, united to establish it. Whilst civil discord reigned through almost every part of Europe; in the midst of the wars of the Normans in France, the dissensions of the brothers Lotharius, Charles, and Louis, and the irruptions of the Huns into Pannonia and Germany, and of the Normans and Danes into England, it was impossible that learning and philosophy should flourish; especially when it must be added, that those who alone might seem likely to promote them, the monks and clergy, were sunk in luxury, idleness, drunkenness, and debauchery. It is not therefore difficult to assign sufficient causes for the ignorance of this period, which prevailed to such a shameful degree, that instructions were given by the pope to the bishops, that they should make inquiries through the parishes of their respective districts, whether the officiating clergy could read the gospels and epistles correctly, and give them a literal interpretation. Another part of this inquiry into the learning of the clergy was, whether they could repeat, *memoriter*, the Athanasian creed, and *understand its meaning, and were able to explain it in familiar language*.⁴² Gislemar, an archbishop of Rheims, being called upon before his consecration to read a portion of the gospels, was found so shamefully ignorant, as not to understand the literal meaning of the passage.

The thick darkness which had now so long overspread the world, was not in the smallest degree dispersed in the *Tenth Century*. At the beginning of this century, in the synod of Rheims, among other grievous complaints, it was said,⁴³ "Whilst even at Rome scarcely any one has as much learning as would be necessary for a porter, with what front shall any one dare to teach what he himself has not learned?" The wretched state of learning and philosophy at this time may be inferred from the narrow limits of that

⁴² Reginon. de Disciplina Eccl. sub. init.

⁴³ Baron. ad Ann. 992. n. 25.

course of instruction, which was supposed to comprehend the whole circle of knowledge. The *trivium* and *quadrivium*, as already explained, in which natural, moral, and metaphysical science was unknown, were now the utmost extent of the learning of the schools; and very few advanced beyond the *trivium*. If dialectics were more studied and practised than in the preceding century, they were applied to no other purpose than to maintain frivolous, but often fierce, contentions on theological dogmas. John of Salisbury complains,⁴⁶ "Men at this time waste their whole lives in controversy; even disputing in the public streets. When too old for any other employment, they still retain their fondness for debate; always seeking but never arriving at truth, because they are ignorant of the ancients, or disdain to adopt their opinions, for ever framing new errors of their own, or, through poverty of judgment, retailing the opinions and sayings of others, and compiling an inconsistent mass, out of which each author would find it difficult to recover his own." These contentions may not improperly be considered as the infancy of the Scholastic philosophy; they did not, however, hinder the general prevalence of a most astonishing degree of ignorance. The records of these times mention⁴⁷ a bishop of Paderborne, who had so entirely neglected the study, not only of the *quadrivium*, but the *trivium*, that he was not able to read the psalter, without committing the most ludicrous blunders.⁴⁸ This universal ignorance was accompanied with universal superstition and credulity. It is at present scarcely to be conceived how easily the most extravagant and absurd tales of marvellous events and miracles were believed, and how much influence the clergy, by means of these tales, notwithstanding their heinous immorality, every where obtained. How far corruption of manners now prevailed among them, may be conceived from the advice of Edgar, king of England, to his clergy,⁴⁹ in which he upbraids them with luxury, grossness of language, lasciviousness of manners, and neglect of duty. When the clergy,

⁴⁶ Metalog. l. ii. c. 7.

⁴⁷ Leibnitz: Coll. Scr. Bruns. t. i. p. 555.

⁴⁸ He read, *Benedic domine regibus et reginis malis et mulabus tuis, for famulis et famulabus tuis.*

⁴⁹ Spelman. Conf. Baron: ad Ann. 925. n. 9, 10.

who alone pretended to learning, were thus infamous for their vices, it was impossible that learning itself should not fall into contempt among the laity. Every trace of literature and philosophy must at this period have been lost, had they not met with a few zealous patrons and able supporters.

Among the patrons of literature which this age produced, are the emperors *Otho* the First and Second, who had themselves some learning, and afforded provision and encouragement to learned men,⁴⁸ and *Athelstan* and *Edgar*, kings of England, the former of whom employed certain Jewish converts to translate the Old Testament into English, and himself wrote several books in English and Latin, among which was a treatise on astrology.⁴⁹

Among the supporters of literature we find, in England, *Bridferth*,⁵⁰ who, besides commenting upon *Bede*, wrote a treatise *De Principiis Mathematicis*, "On Mathematical Principles," and *Computus Latinorum, Græcorum, Hæbræorum, et Anglorum*, "On the Methods of Computing among the Latins, Greeks, Hebrews, and English," preserved in the Bodleian Library; *Dunstan*, archbishop of Canterbury, who, besides the encouragement which he gave to the study of liberal arts in others, himself wrote several books, among which is a treatise "On Occult Philosophy;" *Ethelwold* and *Oswald*, who with *Dunstan* were preceptors to *Edgar*.—In France, *Remigius*, *Constantine*, and *Abbo*, monks who appear to have been, for the period in which they lived, well read in letters and philosophy.—And in Germany, *Nanno*, of Stavern, in West Friesland, who, in the tenth century, wrote a Commentary upon Plato, *De Legibus et de Republica*; and upon Aristotle, *De Cælo et Mundo, et de Ethicis*: *Baldric*, preceptor to Bruno, the brother of *Otho* the Great; and others.⁵¹

One of the most celebrated among the learned of this century was *Gerbert*, a native of Orleans, archbishop of Rheims, and afterwards Pope Sylvester II. He merits a distinguished place in the list of natural philosophers, on account of the skill which he at this period acquired

⁴⁸ Mabill. Præf. in Sec. v. Bened. Laun. c. 21. Coarling. Ant. Acad. Sup. 42.

⁴⁹ Pits. p. 173.

⁵⁰ Lelanc. c. 136.

⁵¹ Fabric. Bibl. Lat. Med. t. v. Coarling. Ant. Supp. 43.

in mathematics, mechanics, hydraulics, and astronomy. Dithmar, writing concerning Gerbert, says,⁵² "He was well skilled in astronomical observations; and far excelled his contemporaries in various kinds of knowledge. After his banishment from France, he fled to the emperor Otho, and during his stay with him at Magdeburg, he made a clock, which he corrected by observing through a tube⁵³ a certain star by which sailors are guided in navigation." The knowledge of nature which Gerbert possessed, so far surpassed that of his contemporaries, that they thought him possessed of magical power, and Benno, a cardinal who owed him a grudge for his opposition to the see of Rome, invented and circulated a tale of his holding converse with the devil.⁵⁴ His epistles, of which one hundred and sixty-one are still extant, contain many curious particulars respecting natural philosophy.⁵⁵ Sylvester II. died in the year 1003.

Numerous causes concurred, in the *Eleventh Century*, to rivet the chains of ignorance. The eruptions of barbarous nations spread terror and desolation through many of the more civilized parts of Europe. The Christian world, prompted by superstition, undertook the romantic design of expelling the Turks from Palestine. Besides this, literature and philosophy met with new interruptions and discouragements. The small portion of learning which remained was studiously confined within the walls of monasteries by ecclesiastics, who found that the best way to preserve the undisturbed possession of their wealth and power, was to keep the laity still more ignorant than themselves. At the same time, the laity were, through superstitious credulity, not disinclined, for the safety of their souls, to submit their understandings to the direction of their priests; and were easily persuaded, that learning and philosophy were nothing more than handmaids to theology, and therefore could be of no use but to the clergy. And, in-

⁵² Chron. l. vi. p. 309. Conf. Trithem. c. 304. Laun. p. 79.

⁵³ Telescopes not being yet in use, this was probably nothing more than an open tube, intended to keep off the surrounding rays of light.

⁵⁴ Leo Urbevitau. in Deliciis Erudit. Lamii, t. ii. p. 163. Baron. Ann. 1003.

⁵⁵ Ed. Masson. Par. 1611. 4to. Fab. Bib. L. Med. t. iii. p. 837.

And how could the unlearned think otherwise, when they saw, that the learned themselves made no other use of philosophy, than to furnish them with weapons, with which they fought against each other with as much violence as the Christians against the Saracens? Men employed in civil or military life would take little interest in these controversies; they would freely leave the clergy in possession of their philosophy, whatever it might be, and be content to admire, without imitating, a kind of excellence which they did not fully comprehend, and which they saw productive of no good effects. Even among the clergy, most of those who aspired after some distinction were contented with making themselves masters of the principles and practice of music; an art which was at this time in such high repute, that no one who was ignorant of it was judged qualified for any scholastic or theological office; and they who excelled in it were ranked among philosophers of consummate erudition. So violent was the passion for music, that even princes were ambitious of excelling in it. Robert, a king of France, was eminently skilled in this art, and acquired great credit by singing with his clergy.⁵⁶ Notwithstanding all this, it does not appear that music was commonly studied or taught upon mathematical principles. Some improvement, however, the art received from the monks of this period. Guido Aretime, a Benedictine, acquired great fame by expressing the musical notes in a new scale, *ut, re, mi, fa, so, la*, in order to facilitate the learning of this art.⁵⁷ He is said to have taken the words from a hymn of Paulus Diaconus on John Baptist.⁵⁸

Ut queant laxis	Re sonare fibris
Mi ra gestorum	Fa muli tuorum
So lve polluti	La biis reatum,

Sanctè Joannès

He made this invention public in his *Micrologos*, or two books *De Musica*. After all, this invention was no very material improvement upon the ancients; for before Guido, the musical scale had twenty notes; and the octaves were

⁵⁶ Trihem. c. 204.

⁵⁷ Sigebert, c. 144. et in Chron. ad Ann. 1025.

⁵⁸ Weizius in Heortologie, p. 296.

as well distinguished among the Egyptians by seven vowels, or by the method which Pope Gregory introduced, the use of the first seven letters of the alphabet.⁵⁹

Nevertheless, the eleventh century was not without its learned men. Though science and the arts met with little encouragement from the princes of this period, there were not wanting scholars, whose genius and industry enabled them in some measure to rise above the difficulties of their situations, and whose literary and philosophical labours cast some rays of light upon this gloomy period. *Oliver of Malsbury* excelled his contemporaries in the knowledge of mathematical and natural philosophy. *Ingulphus*, secretary to William the Conqueror, devoted himself to study, in the University of Oxford, and made Aristotle his guide in philosophy, and Cicero in rhetoric.⁶⁰ *Fulbert*, a pupil of Gerbert, who enjoyed the patronage of Robert, king of France, and of Canute, king of England, was esteemed one of the most learned men of the age.⁶¹ *Berenger*, of Cologne,⁶² was a great master of the dialectic art, and displayed much courage as well as good sense by the opposition which he made against the doctrine of transubstantiation; an absurd dogma, which nothing but such a total neglect of philosophy as disgraced the Middle Age could have produced. *Bruno*,⁶³ of Cologne, a pupil of Berenger, and preceptor and counsellor to Pope Urban the Second, retired into monastic life, and founded the order of Carthusians. *Lanfranc*, archbishop of Canterbury, opposed the heresy of Berenger, and employed the weapons of dialectics with great ingenuity and address in defence of transubstantiation. His writings⁶⁴ are celebrated for the purity of their Latinity. *Anselm*,⁶⁵ who was also preferred to the archbishopric of Canterbury, applied the subtlety of logic to theology. As an example of his refinement may be mentioned his arguments for the being of God, derived from the abstract idea of Deity, afterwards resumed by Des Cartes. His writings,⁶⁶ "On the Will of

⁵⁹ Voss. de Scient. Math. c. 22. § 7. Et de Viribus Rythmi, p. 94.

⁶⁰ Fab. t. iii. p. 89.

⁶¹ Trithem. c. 316. Laun. c. 40.

⁶² Laun. c. 5. W. Malmab. Hist. Angl. l. iii. p. 113. Sigebert, c. 154.

⁶³ Laun. c. 4.

⁶⁴ Ed. Par. 1646. fol.

⁶⁵ Trithem. c. 351.

⁶⁶ Par. 1675. 1721.

God;" "Free Will;" "Truth;" "The Consistency of the Doctrine of Divine Providence," with that of Predestination, and other points, which abound in logical and metaphysical abstractions, entitle him to the honour of having largely contributed towards preparing the way for the Scholastic system, which soon afterwards universally prevailed. To this list must be added *Hermannus*,^a a self-taught German, who wrote Latin corrections of some part of Aristotle's works, and who seems to have been the first writer in the West who translated Arabic books into Latin.

On the whole, though Gerbert, Anselm, and some others were versed in the subtleties of logic and metaphysics, they were so far from restoring true science, that they involved the study of philosophy in new embarrassments. The few who, by the help of superior genius and industry, raised themselves above the ordinary level of the times, lost themselves in the clouds of metaphysics. They were wholly employed in attempting to explain abstract notions of theology, by terms almost without meaning; hereby accumulating frivolous controversies, and obtruding upon the church new refinements in theological speculations, which soon grew up into that monstrous form, to be described in the next book, the Scholastic Philosophy.

A circumstance which greatly increased the confusion and obscurity which prevailed in the schools at this period was, that for want of an accurate knowledge of the Greek tongue, dialectics were not studied in the original writings of Aristotle, but in the wretched Manual of Augustine, which was generally used in the public schools. The original works of Aristotle, notwithstanding the pains which Nannus, Hermannus, and others, had taken to translate select parts, lay neglected till the beginning of the twelfth century, when his logical and metaphysical writings, lately brought from Constantinople, were rendered into Latin, and read in the University of Paris. From this and other causes, the study of dialectics produced nothing but frivolous disputes and fruitless logomachies; of which this century affords a memorable example in the controversy, which was raised by Rosceline,^b whether the personal

^a Trithem. Ann. Herz. t. i. p. 148. Fab. L. Med. t. iii. p. 706.

^b H. Gandavensis de Sc. Ec. c. 5. p. 118.

distinctions in the Trinity be *real* or *nominal*; whence afterwards arose the metaphysical sects of the Realists and Nominalists.*

CHAP. III.

OF THE SCHOLASTIC PHILOSOPHY.

SECT. I.

Of the State of Philosophy in general, from the Twelfth Century to the Revival of Letters.

THE Dialectic philosophy, loaded with metaphysical subtleties, which had been studied and professed by several of the clergy towards the close of the eleventh century, began, at the opening of the twelfth, to be publicly taught in the schools, and to take the lead of every other kind of learning. Abelard, who was a young man at this time, gave this account of the commencement of his studies at Paris:† “Preferring the study of logic to all others, and the disputations of the schools to the trophies of war, I entirely devoted myself to this pursuit, and, like a Peripatetic philosopher, travelled through different countries, exercising myself, wherever an opportunity offered, in these contests. At length I came to Paris, where this kind of learning had for some time been cultivated, and put myself under the tuition of an eminent and able preceptor, William de Champeaux.” He proceeds to relate several particulars concerning the disputes which were carried on in this school upon the subject of universals, which sufficiently prove, that philosophy was wasting its strength upon trifles, and that it was now, perhaps, more than ever,

* Vidend. Fabric. Bibl. Eccl. Hamb. 1718. fol. Trithemius de Script. Eccl. Miræi Auctarium de Script. Eccl. J. Sarisber. Policrat. et Metablog. Op. Lugd. Bat. 1638. Laun. de Scholis celeb. Hamb. 1717. Coming. Antiqu. Acad. Diss. iii. Fabr. Bibl. Lat. Med. et Infim. Reschenberg. de Orig. Theol. Myst. ap. Exerc. in N. Test.

† Hist. Calam. suar. c. iii.

the employment of the philosophical world to disputes de *longo cuprina*.

If it be asked, why dialectic philosophy was at this time in such high esteem, the obvious answer is, that it was supposed to be the key of theology, without which it would be impossible to unlock the mysteries of sacred wisdom. It was on account of this supposed alliance between logic and theology, that the former was made the principal object of study in all the schools, and that those who excelled in the dialectic art were regarded with the highest admiration, and attended by crowds of pupils. Besides this general cause for the universal prevalence of a taste for logical disputations, there were other collateral circumstances, which at this period contributed to produce the same effect.

The Aristotelian philosophy had now for several centuries been studied by the Saracens, and was at this time taught in their schools in Spain. These schools were visited by many of the western Christians, who learned Arabic, that they might be able to read translations of Aristotle, and other philosophical writers in that language, and who afterwards translated many Arabic books into the European tongues. The first person who undertook this task, seems to have been *Constantine Afer*,² a monk of Cassino. He travelled into the East, and spent thirty years among the Arabians, Persians, Indians, and Egyptians, making himself master of the learning of each nation; after which he returned to the monastery of Cassino, and spent the rest of his days in translating books from various languages. He is said to have been master of Hebrew, Syriac, Chaldaic, Arabic, Coptic, Ethiopic, Indian, Greek, Latin, and Italian. Others were inspired with the same desire of acquiring that learning among the Arabians, which their own country would not afford. *Daniel Morley*,³ of Norfolk, a student in the universities of Oxford and Paris, visited Spain, and learned mathematics in the Arabic tongue at Toledo, and after his return wrote a book, *De inferiori et superiori Parte Mundi*, "On the lower and upper Part of the World," which he dedicated

² Pét. Diacon. Aet. ad Leonis Chron. Cassin. l. iii. c. 35. Frithem. c. 286.

³ Leland, c. 220. Pitts. p. 254c.

to *John, Bishop of Norwich*, and another; *De Principiis Mathematicis*, "On the Principles of Mathematics," *Robert Retin*,⁴ archdeacon of Pampelona, in Spain, after travelling among the Saracens both in Europe and Arabia, with a Latin translation of the Koran. *Adelard*,⁵ an English monk, of the Benedictine monastery of Bath, in the reign of Henry the First, went among the Saracens in search of mathematical and physical science, and having learned Arabic, translated from that language many Greek writings, among which were the Elements of Euclid. Other translators appeared about the same time, by whose industry the logical and metaphysical writings of Aristotle were dispersed through France, Germany, and Italy.⁶

Another cause which served to establish a general taste for the Peripatetic philosophy, and particularly for the Aristotelian logic, was, that about this period many Greek copies of the writings of Aristotle were brought from Constantinople into the West. Before this time, though they had been read in the original by a few monks more learned than the rest, the greater part had been contented with the translations of Victorinus and Boethius. But at the beginning of the twelfth century, the original writings of Aristotle were studied in Paris; whence they were introduced among the Germans, by Otho of Freisingen, in the time of Abelard.⁷

The guardians of the church observed with an apprehensive and jealous eye, the inundation of new opinions, which this fondness for logical disputations introduced. *Almaric*, who taught theology at Paris, appeared to the second Parisian council, in the year 1209, to have imbibed many errors from the study of Aristotle, and fell under their ecclesiastical censure. *David de Dinanto*, a disciple of *Almaric*, soon after shared the same fate; and the writings of both, which, after all, contained doctrines rather Platonic than Peripatetic, were sentenced to be publicly burned. This sentence was followed by a general prohibition of the use of the physical and metaphysical writings

⁴ Hist. de char. Inf. p. 230. ⁵ W. Malmsh. l. ii. c. 10. Leland, c. 171.

⁶ Trithem. c. 477. Ann. Hir. t. i. p. 596.

⁷ Gossend. Exerc. Parad. adv. Arist. Ex. iii. Leun. de Fort. Arist. c.

1. Helmold. de Slavis, l. ii. c. 9.

of Aristotle in the schools, by the Synod of Paris, and afterwards, under Pope Innocent the Third, by the Council of the Lateran.⁸

These violent measures, however, were so far from exterminating the evils against which they were directed, that they in fact increased them; for when those who adopted this new method of philosophizing perceived the jealousy and displeasure which it raised among the heads of councils and synods, they became so much the more tenacious of the right which had been invaded, and zealous in the support of their innovations. The fondness for the subtleties of Aristotelian logic and metaphysics became so general, that the orthodox clergy complained, that scholars spent their whole time in disputation.⁹ Their complaints and their prohibitions were, however, alike ineffectual; and it was at length found necessary, by degrees, and under certain restrictions, to favour the study of Aristotle. His dialectics, physics, and metaphysics, were by express statute received into the University of Paris; but it was with this limitation,¹⁰ that no one should be permitted to enter upon the study of them, who had not previously devoted six years to learning; a prudent precaution, by means of which the professors in the ancient schools secured to themselves a succession of scholars. It was further ordered,¹¹ in the year 1231, by a bull of Pope Gregory the Ninth, that only such books of Aristotle should be used in the schools, as had been examined and purged from errors; and that students in theology should not be ambitious of the reputation of philosophers, but should confine themselves to such subjects of disputation, as might be determined by the theological writings of the fathers.

In several other countries, the Aristotelian philosophy was received with less opposition. In England, the writings of the Stagyrte were read with great avidity; and in Germany and Italy, the emperor Frederic the Second, a patron of letters, greatly encouraged the study of Aristotle, and other ancient writers, by employing learned men to translate their works into Latin; but for want of a compe-

⁸ Laun. de Fort. Ar. l. c. Rigord. in Pithoei und. Script. p. 206.

⁹ Gualter contr. Hæres. apud Laun. p. 187.

¹⁰ Laun. de Fort. Arist. c. iv.

¹¹ L. c. c. vi.

tent knowledge of the Greek language, or through a scarcity of copies of the Greek text, translations were chiefly made from the Arabic corrections. It was in this imperfect representation of the original that Aristotle was commonly read, till the time of the taking of Constantinople, when many copies of his works were brought into the West. Whence it is easy to perceive, that the philosophers of this period must have had no very perfect knowledge of the doctrines of this obscure and subtle writer, which, nevertheless, they acknowledged as of oracular authority. The truth is, that they received the Peripatetic philosophy through the medium of the Saracenic, and were in reality as much indebted to Averroës as to Aristotle. The name of Aristotle, however, from the end of the twelfth century, obtained universal dominion; and so far were his writings, after this time, from falling under the censure of councils and popes, that the Aristotelian and Saracenic philosophy became the main pillars of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. In the year 1366,¹² cardinals were appointed by Pope Urban the Fifth to settle the manner in which the writings of Aristotle should be studied in the University of Paris; and in the year 1462, Charles the Seventh ordered the works of Aristotle to be read and publicly explained in that University. Thus the union between the Peripatetic philosophy and the Christian religion was confirmed, and Aristotle became not only the interpreter, but even the judge of Saint Paul.¹³

During the period from the twelfth to the fourteenth century, though multitudes professed to philosophize, true philosophy and learning made little progress. Instead of uniting their endeavours to enlighten mankind, the Scholastics lost themselves in metaphysical darkness. They carried on their disputes with such vehemence and acrimony, that many ludicrous and many bloody frays happened among them. Nominalists, Realists, Verbalists, Formalists, Thomists, Scotists, and Occamists, were at open war among each other. The whole world was disturbed with the idle contests of the Scholastic philosophy from the twelfth century to the Reformation: and so deeply did this philosophy

¹² Laun. l. c. p. 202.

¹³ Laun. c. ix. p. 210. Patr. Disc. Perip. t. i. l. xii. p. 162. l. xiii. p. 613.

take root, that even to this day it has not been entirely extirpated.

The compilation of the canon law, in the twelfth century, by Gratian, in his *Discordantium Canonum Concordia*, "Harmony of discordant Canons," and the subsequent union of the canon law with that of theology and philosophy, must also be mentioned among the causes which prevented the revival of knowledge.¹⁴ This compilation, made without judgment, under the authority of the emperor Frederick the First, became a body of ecclesiastical jurisprudence, which the clergy were required to study and observe. This code was even made an authoritative guide in moral doctrine and discipline, and prevented the study of ethics till the middle of the fifteenth century, when the morals of Aristotle were again permitted to be read. But the worst evil was, that they who had framed this unnatural union of canon law, Scholastic philosophy and theology, finding it exceedingly conducive to their own emolument, resolutely set their faces against all innovations, and proscribed with their whole authority those learned men, who had the boldness to attempt further improvements in philosophy. Of this the history of the persecution of Reuchlin will, in the sequel, afford a memorable example.¹⁵

SECT. II.

Of the Scholastics.

THE Scholastics, whose history we now proceed to relate in detail, seem to have borrowed their name from those professors, who, in the public schools of cathedrals and monasteries, taught philosophy and the liberal arts. In

¹⁴ Ziegler. de Orig. et. Incrēm. Jur. Canon.

¹⁵ Vidend. J. Sariab. Metalog. l. ii. c. 7. l. iv. c. 24, 25. Friend. Hist. Med. p. iii. p. 2. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. xiii. p. 123. Bibl. Lat. Med. t. i. p. 29. t. v. p. 551. Jamesii Eclog. MSS. Ox. et Cantab. Lud. Vives de Caus. Corr. Art. l. v. Campanella de Gentilismo non retinendo, p. 19. Hottinger. Hist. Ecc. Sec. xii. Martene Anecd. t. iv. p. 163. Buisi Hist. Ac. Par. t. iii. p. 24. N. Alex. Hist. Ec. t. vii. p. 75. Buddeus de Hæres. ex Phil. Arist. Obs. Hal. Lat. t. i. Obs. 15. Thomas de Exest. Mundi Stoic. Diss. xiv. Petri de Vincia, l. iii. ep. 69.

the Colleges of Canons, which, in the times of Charlemagne and Louis the Pious, were erected near the episcopal churches, or cathedrals, and in the abbacies of monasteries, it was customary to have preceptors, or Scholastic doctors, to whom the charge of the education of youth was committed: and great care was at first taken by those who founded or supported these schools, that able and learned men should be appointed to perform the offices of instruction.¹⁶ The name thus introduced remained, when the care of the schools was no longer in the hands of Scholastic doctors. For when emperors, princes, and bishops, had, from a desire of banishing ignorance and barbarism, enriched this useful office with ample endowments, wealth produced indolence; the labour of teaching was transferred to those who would undertake it for the smallest salary; and the Scholastic doctors themselves (for, that they might enjoy the profits of this establishment, they still retained the name) paid little attention to letters, and only vied with each other in luxury and debauchery. A lively picture of the infamous lives of these Scholastics is drawn in the *Spectulum Humanae Vitæ*, "Mirror of Human Life," written by Roderic, bishop of Zamora, in Spain, in which he complains,¹⁷ "that they were no longer learned themselves, nor able to teach others; that they never visited the schools; that they united with the most contemptible ignorance, the most shameful depravity of manners; and that, through fear lest their places should be filled up by men more learned than themselves, they gave no encouragement to erudition." In the schools of several monasteries this noble institution was less abused; and some of the Scholastics were employed in instructing, not only those young men who were devoted to a monastic life, but the sons of noblemen, and others of the laity. And this was the chief means of preserving alive the embers of science and learning, in the dark period between the eighth and the twelfth century.

From the schools of monasteries and cathedrals at length sprang public schools and academies, in which the liberal

¹⁶ Conring. Ant. Ac. Supp. 39. Tribbechov. de Diy. Schol. c. i. p. 32.

¹⁷ L. ii. c. 17.

arts and sacred learning were taught; and the method of philosophizing, which had prevailed in the monasteries, and among the ecclesiastics, was transferred to the professors of philosophy and literature in these public schools. What that method was, sufficiently appears from the particulars which have been already related concerning the philosophy of the Middle Age. An opinion having commonly prevailed, that philosophy was only to be considered as an handmaid to theology, and to be pursued merely to furnish weapons for theological controversy, the dialectical branch of philosophy was chiefly studied, first in the Institutes of Augustine, a book written in the manner of the Stoics, and afterwards in the writings of Aristotle. The professors of philosophy, or the Scholastics, perceiving that eminence in the dialectic art was the sure road to popularity and preferment, devoted their principal attention to this study; and the schools, now confided to men who placed their chief merit in the skill with which they handled the weapons of intellectual warfare, produced nothing but polemics. The spirit of disputation, transferred from the old seminaries of learning to every new establishment, was disseminated through Europe; and education was, every where, nothing else but a course of instruction in dialectics and in metaphysics. The general introduction of the writings of Aristotle into the schools, established a taste for this study. The whole body of the clergy employed themselves in solving abstruse and subtle questions, which were always merely speculative, and often merely verbal. In this manner the Aristotelian dialectics became by degrees intimately connected with theology, and on this account obtained the zealous patronage of those who presided in the church; so that almost the whole Christian church became Scholastics.¹⁸

Under all this appearance of philosophizing, it must, however, be remarked, that nothing of the true spirit of philosophy was to be found. The art of reasoning was employed, not in the free investigation of truth, but merely in supporting the doctrines of the Romish church, the canons of which announced a perpetual anathema and excommu-

¹⁸ Tribbechov. de Div. Scholasticis, c. iii. p. 96. Ib. Præf. Heumanni, p. 20.

nication upon all who should attempt to corrupt the faith, and bound the clergy, in the form of a solemn oath, to defend the papal see, and the institutions of the holy fathers, against all opposition.¹⁹ Hence philosophy became nothing more than an instrument in the hands of the pontiff, to confirm and extend his spiritual dominion. Some opposition, indeed, the speculative philosophy of the Scholastics met with, from that mystical system, derived from the enthusiasm of the Alexandrian school, which Joannes Scotus Erigena, from the spurious books of Dionysius, introduced into the Christian church; a system which professed to raise the mind from the barren pursuit of Scholastic controversy, to the pure and sublime contemplation of God and Divine things. But the only consequence of this opposition was, at first, to excite mutual jealousies and animosity between the Mystics and Scholastics, and afterwards to produce a coalition between them highly injurious to the church.

Many disputes have arisen concerning the origin of the Scholastic philosophy, which may easily be settled by a careful comparison of the facts, which have been already related, concerning the state of philosophy in the Middle Age. The case was briefly this:

The high reputation which St. Augustine obtained in the Christian church, gave his treatise on dialectics universal authority, and led those who were inclined to philosophize, implicitly to follow his method of applying the subtleties of Stoic reasoning, and the mysteries of the Platonic doctrine, to the explanation of the sacred doctrines of revelation. The dialectic art, thus introduced, was further encouraged by Latin versions of some of the writings of Aristotle, and of Porphyry's Introduction to the Categories. The study of logical subtleties was pursued under these guides in the schools of the monasteries, particularly in Ireland, whence many scholars from England and Scotland carried this kind of philosophy into their own countries; and from Britain it afterwards passed into France, and other parts of Europe.

From this time, the ecclesiastics, who, during a long period of tumult and barbarism, kept the small remains of learning and philosophy in their own hands, made no other

¹⁹ Decret. Dist. 23. Dec. Greg. de Jur. p. 287.

use of them than as pillars to support the hierarchy, or as weapons of defence against its adversaries. The whole history of the church, from the eighth to the eleventh century, proves that Scholastic men, that is, the professors of philosophy and theology in the monastic schools, studied and taught philosophy only for this purpose; and there can be no doubt, that the violent ecclesiastical disputes of these times fostered that disposition towards subtle refinement in speculation, which at length brought the Scholastic philosophy to maturity. Towards the close of the eleventh century, this spirit so generally prevailed, that disputation upon theology and philosophy became the chief occupation and amusement of the learned; and, in process of time, various sects sprung up, in which questions purely logical were confounded with points of theology, and dialectics were applied to the explanation of the Scriptures. This kind of philosophy was taught, not only in the monastic schools, but in public academies; and Aristotle, at first imperfectly represented in Arabic and Latin versions, and afterwards brought into full view in his own original writings, obtained sovereign authority in the whole Christian world. Thus the Scholastic philosophy appears not to have been the invention of any one man, but to have risen up by almost imperceptible degrees from the fifth to the twelfth century, when it attained its maturity.²⁰

The Scholastics are commonly divided into three distinct ages; the first, from Lanfranc, or Abelard, and his disciple Peter Lombard, to the middle of the thirteenth century, when Albert flourished; the second, from that time to the year 1330; and the third, from the last period to the Reformation.

After Lanfranc, Anselm, and Rosceline, who have been already mentioned, in the first age of the Scholastics arose *William de Champeaux*,²¹ appointed bishop of Catalaun in the year 1113, and afterwards archbishop of Paris. He

²⁰ Budd. Isag. Hist. Theol. l. ii. c. 1. § 7. Dupin. Meth. Stud. Theol. c. ii. p. 19. 21. Alsted. Encyclop. t. i. p. 105. Thomas. Orat. xii. p. 268. Heumann. Præf. p. 13. J. Sarisber. Metalog. l. ii. c. 9. Thom. Hist. Sap. et Stult. p. iii. p. 226. 228. Mabillon. de Stud. Monast. p. ii.

²¹ Abelard. Hist. Cal. suar. c. 2. Pagi ad Ann. 1121. Oudin. de Sc. F. t. ii. p. 961. Sainmarthan. t. ii. p. 604. Martene Anecd. t. v. p. 877.

taught dialectics in the University of Paris with great applause. He maintained the doctrine of the Realists, who held that all individual things partake of the one essence of their species, and are only modified by accident. He had the appellation of the *Venerable Doctor*.

From the school of William de Champeaux arose *Peter Abelard*, born in Palais, in Bretagne, in the year 1079. He early applied himself, with great success, to the study of metaphysics and logic, under Rosceline, who established the sect of the Nominalists, maintaining, in opposition to the Realists, that universals have no real existence out of the mind, and are to be referred wholly to words or names. From nature and habit Abelard²² possessed a wonderful subtlety of thought, a most retentive memory, and uncommon facility and fluency of speech. After travelling through several countries to improve himself in the arts of disputation, he became a student of dialectics under William de Champeaux, in Paris. But he soon ventured to contradict the opinions of his master, and held disputations with him, in which, in the judgment of many of his fellow-students, he was frequently victorious. This circumstance at length awakened the jealousy of the preceptor, and inflamed the ambition of the pupil. The consequence was, that Abelard soon left William de Champeaux, and opened a school of his own, at Melun, in the vicinity of Paris, where the splendour of his superior talents in disputation attracted general admiration, and eclipsed the fame of Champeaux.

The violent exertions which were necessary to support his rising reputation, and maintain his ground against his numerous enemies (for Champeaux had many followers) brought Abelard into a state of debility, which rendered it necessary that he should for a while retire from his labours. After an absence of two years, which he passed in his native country, he found, upon his return, that his preceptor had taken the monastic habit among the regular canons, but still continued to teach rhetoric and logic in the schools of the monasteries. In hope of regaining his popularity, Abelard again visited his school, and renewed his contro-

²² Hist. Calamitatum suarum, Par. 1616. 4to. cum Annot. Du Chesne. Vit. Pet. Abelard, a Gervasio, Par. 1720. Bayle.

versy with Champeaux on the points then agitated between the Nominalists and Realists; and he argued with such strength and subtlety, that the pupils of Champeaux came over in crowds to Abelard. Even the professor of the former school of Champeaux resigned his chair to the young philosopher. This created a violent opposition on the part of Champeaux, who had interest sufficient to obtain the appointment of a new professor: upon which Abelard retired for a while to Melun; but as soon as he heard that Champeaux had withdrawn into the country, he went to Paris, and opened a school upon Mount St. Genevieve, where he easily vanquished his rival, the new professor of the cathedral school, who, through mortification, entered into a monastery. Champeaux now resumed the contest; and it was continued with great violence, till the former was preferred to the see of Chalons, and the latter, probably through an envious desire of attaining equal honours with his antagonist, removed to Laon, to study theology under Anselm. But finding his lectures (as he himself says) like trees abounding with leaves but barren of fruit, he soon left him, and began himself to lecture in theology, after the manner of Anselm, by commenting upon some part of the sacred Scriptures. To give the hearers of Anselm an unequivocal proof of his extensive learning and ready ability, he undertook to explain, on the shortest notice, any portion of the Scriptures, and illustrate it by pertinent quotations from the fathers. The passage given him for this purpose was the beginning of the prophecy of Ezekiel, which he the next day explained, in a theological lecture, with so much success, that all his hearers expressed the highest admiration of his talents. Anselm, through jealousy, pretended that Abelard was too young a man to read theology, and obliged him to desist from his lectures. Abelard upon this returned to Paris, where his explanations of the Scriptures soon raised his reputation to such a height, that he had crowded auditories, and obtained great profit from his lectures.

In these philosophical and sacred labours, Abelard was interrupted by his celebrated amour with Heloise, the beautiful niece of an avaricious canon named Fulbert, who *prudently* employed this young man, upon easy terms, to become her private preceptor. The particulars of the story

are well known, and might not perhaps perfectly comport with the gravity of philosophical history. Suffice it to say, that Abelard's fair pupil made a much more rapid progress in the lessons of love, than in those of philosophy; and that when Fulbert discovered that his niece's studies had taken a turn so contrary to his wishes, his indignation fell with such *cruel severity* upon the young preceptor, that, in vexation and despair, rather than from devotion, he gave himself up to the monastic life in the abbey of St. Denys. Heloise, who had already retired into the convent of Argenteuil, gave the only proof that now remained of her unalienable attachment to Abelard, by taking the veil.

Abelard, in consequence of the freedom with which he censured the monks of St. Denys, became so obnoxious to them, that he was obliged to leave the monastery. He now withdrew to the monastery of Theobard, count of Champagne, where he resumed his public lectures, with a degree of popularity which rendered him an object of jealousy to other professors. Alberic and Lotulf, two preceptors in the school at Rheims, apprehensive for the reputation and success of their seminary, became inveterate enemies of Abelard, and took occasion, from a treatise which he wrote upon the Trinity, to charge him with heresy. The archbishop of Rheims listened to this accusation, and summoned a council at Soissons, in the year 1120, which convicted him of heresy,²³ without knowledge enough of his system to understand wherein the heresy consisted. The persecution was carried on with unrelenting severity; the book was ordered to be burned, and its author, after making his recantation by reciting the Athanasian creed, to retire to the cloister of St. Medard. He was soon, indeed, by the command of the pope's legate, restored to the convent of St. Denys; but he here found himself still surrounded with enemies. Happening in private conversation to maintain that St. Denys, the founder of the monastery, was not Dionysius the Areopagite mentioned in Scripture, but a Corinthian bishop, the abbot threatened to complain to the king of the indignity which Abelard had cast upon St.

²³ Abelard illustrates the doctrine of the Trinity by comparing it to a syllogistic argument, in which the Major, the Minor, and the Conclusion though Three Propositions, make One Syllogism.

Denys. Abelard perceived the storm which was gathering, and again fled into Champagne, where he was obliged to remain till the death of the abbot, which happened in the year 1122. His successor permitted Abelard to lead a monastic life wherever he pleased, and he retired to a pleasant retreat in the diocese of Troyes, near Nogent, where he built an oratory, which he consecrated to the Paraclete. Here he soon found himself surrounded by pupils, and was again harassed by persecution. Norbart and Bernard, two fanatic teachers, made grievous complaints of the heretical tenets of Abelard, and rendered his situation so uncomfortable and dangerous, that he had almost resolved to fly to some country where Christianity was not professed, when, through the interest of the duke of Bretagne, he was, in the forty-seventh year of his age, elected Superior of the Benedictine Monastery of Saint Gildas, in the diocese of Vannes.

At first, this monastery seemed to promise him a tranquil retreat: but the zeal with which he reprobated the disorders of the monks, raised against him such a violent spirit of opposition, that several attempts were made upon his life.

The nuns of the convent of Argenteuil, over which Heloise presided, being expelled by the abbot of St. Denys, Abelard presented her with his oratory of the Paraclete, and she retired thither with some of the sisterhood. Pope Innocent the Second appointed her abbess of this convent, in the year 1137.

It is probable, that about this time Abelard returned to Paris, and resumed his former situation at Mount St. Genevieve, as preceptor of learning and philosophy, for John of Salisbury says,²⁴ that he attended the Palatian Peripatetic (under which name he frequently speaks of Abelard) who preached in Mount St. Genevieve, the second year after the death of Henry the Second, that is, in the year 1137. This may account for the renewed persecution which he suffered through the instigation of Bernard, who appeared as his accuser before the archbishop of Sens. In this trial, which happened in 1140, several propositions from the writings of Abelard were adjudged heretical, and he was

²⁴ Metalog. l. ii. c. 10.

condemned unheard. The sentence was confirmed by the pope, who ordered the books to be burned, and pronounced *anathema* upon the writer. Through the solicitation of Peter Maurice, abbot of Clugni, Abelard was, however, absolved from the sentence, and permitted to pass his days in this monastery. Here he enjoyed great tranquillity, and consecrated his time to religion. On account of his infirmities, he was, in his last days, removed to the priory of St. Marcellus, a pleasant and healthful situation on the Saon, near Chalons, where to the last he applied with great assiduity to his studies, and seldom suffered a moment to pass, in which he was not either praying, or reading, or writing, or dictating. Abelard died at the age of sixty-three, in the year 1142.²⁵ After his death his body was sent to Heloise, and interred in the convent of the Paraclete. Heloise survived him twenty-two years. Abelard, a man of ready talents, extensive erudition, and elegant taste, who rose superior to the prejudices of his age, affords, in the history of his life, an instructive example of the danger of neglecting the dictates of prudence in the pursuit of distinction or pleasure. He wrote many philosophical treatises, which have never been edited. His "Christian Theology," epistles, and several other works, have been published in one volume.²⁶

From the school of Abelard, besides many other disciples, of whom he had great numbers, was *Peter Lombard*,²⁷ a celebrated theologian, born in Lombardy, and educated at Paris. He was advanced to the episcopal see of Paris, in the year 1159. He wrote a theological system, which he entitled, *Magister Sententiarum*, "The Master of Sentences," in which, after the method of Augustine, he illustrated the doctrines of the church by sentences collected from the fathers, with select questions for disputation; a work which obtained universal authority in the theological

²⁵ Conf. Berengar. Apol. pro Abel. J. Sarisber. Met. l. ii. passim. Pet. Ven. Ep. l. iv. c. 24. Otto Frising. l. i. c. 47. Pet. Cluniac. Ep. l. iv. c. 24. Abel. Op. p. 337. Berrington's Life of Abelard, 1789.

²⁶ Paris, 1717.

²⁷ Hen. Gandav. c. xxxi. App. p. 123. Trithem. de Scrip. Eccl. c. 377. p. 96. Annal. Hirsaug. t. i. p. 435. Vinc. Bellovac. Spec. Hist. l. xxix. c. 1. Leun. de Fort. Arist. p. 182. 192.

schools, and upon which innumerable commentaries were written. He followed the track marked out by his preceptor Abelard. He died in the year 1164.

This age also produced *Robert Pulleyn*,²⁸ who, in the time of the civil wars, then raging in England, withdrew into France, where he enjoyed the friendship of Bernard. On his return to England, he revived the study of the Scriptures, and taught theology for five years in Oxford. His *Sententiarum Libri*,²⁹ "Books of Sentences," differ in some measure from the general character of the times; preferring the simple authority of reason and Scripture to the testimony of the fathers, or the subtlety of metaphysics. He was admitted into the college of cardinals, in the year 1144.

Gilbert Porretan,³⁰ bishop of Poitiers, is memorable in the history of the Gallic church, for the introduction of new phrases and subtle distinctions into theology, which brought upon him a suspicion of heresy in the doctrine of the Divine Nature. Bernard, the great champion for the orthodox faith, who was better qualified for invective than argument, bitterly complained of Gilbert to the pope, for asserting, that the Divine essence was not God himself; that the properties of a person are not the person himself; that the Divine Nature was not incarnate, and the like: assertions which arose entirely from the subtlety of logical and metaphysical distinctions concerning the meaning of the terms, essence, person, and nature, and which afford a curious example of the cobweb refinements which metaphysical philosophy at this time introduced into religion. Gilbert consented to acknowledge, before the pope, that in theology there is no distinction between nature and person, and that the Divine essence may not only be said to belong to God, but to be God; and he was confirmed in his ecclesiastical dignities. This happened in the year 1147. This most subtle philosopher died in the year 1154.

In this first age of the Scholastics, another celebrated name is *Peter Comestor*,³¹ dean of Troyes. He wrote a

²⁸ Cave. Hist. Lit. p. 582. J. Sarisb. Met. l. ii. c. 10.

²⁹ Paris, 1651. fol.

³⁰ Hen. Gandav. de S. E. c. 17. App. c. 7. p. 121. Trithem. de S. E. c. 368. p. 94. Otto Frising. de Gestis Fred. l. ii. c. 46.

³¹ Henr. Andegav. c. 31. p. 123. Trithem. de S. E. c. 380. Ann. Hirs. t. i. p. 435.

Breviary of the historical books of the Old and New Testament, for the use of the schools, under the title of *Historia Scholastica*; a work, in the judgment of Father Simon, of great use in biblical learning.

One of the most learned and valuable men of this age was *John of Salisbury*,³² surnamed the Little. He visited Paris in the year 1137, and attended upon the lectures of Abelard, and other masters, with such industry and success, that he acquired an uncommon share of knowledge both in philosophy and letters. At an early period of life, his poverty obliged him to undertake the office of preceptor: notwithstanding which he made such good use of his leisure, that he acquired a competent knowledge of dialectics, physics, and morals, as well as an acquaintance with the Greek, and (what was at that time a rare accomplishment,) with the Hebrew languages. He may justly be ranked among the first scholars of his age. After many years had elapsed, he resolved to revisit the companions of his early studies on Mount St. Genevieve, in order to confer with them on the topics on which they had formerly disputed. His account of this visit³³ affords a striking picture of the philosophical character of this age. "I found them," says he, "the same men, and in the same place; nor had they advanced a single step towards resolving our ancient questions, nor added a single proposition, however small, to their stock of knowledge. Whence I inferred, what indeed it was easy to collect, that dialectic studies, however useful they may be when connected with other branches of learning, are in themselves barren and useless." Speaking in another place of the philosophers of his time, he complains, that they collected auditors solely for the ostentation of science, and designedly rendered their discourses obscure, that they might appear loaded with the mysteries of wisdom; and that though all professed to follow Aristotle, they were so ignorant of his true doctrine, that in attempting to explain his meaning, they often advanced a Platonic notion, or some erroneous tenet equally distant from the true system of

³² Bulæi Hist. Ac. Par. t. ii. p. 750. Fab. Bib. L. M. t. iii. p. 380.

³³ Metal. l. i. c. 2, 3. l. ii. c. 17. 19.

Aristotle and of Plato. From these observations, and from many similar passages to be found in his writings, it appears that John of Salisbury was aware of the trifling character both of the philosophy and the philosophers of his age; owing, probably, to the uncommon share of good sense which he possessed, as well as to the unusual extent and variety of his learning. Throughout his writings there are evident traces of a fruitful genius, of sound understanding, of various erudition, and, with due allowance for the age in which he lived, of correct taste. He was a strenuous advocate for Thomas Becket, and, in the year 1163, became the companion of his exile. He died about the year 1182. His writings leave no room to doubt, that if he had lived in a more fortunate period, he would have shone in the class of learned men. His *Metalogicum*, or apology for grammar, philology, and the Aristotelian logic, his *Policraticum*, and his Letters, are his most valuable works.

Other Scholastics of some repute at this period are the following:³⁴ *Alexander Hales*, of the order of Minors, who belonged to a monastery in the county of Gloucester. He was educated in Paris, and became a famous preceptor in philosophical theology. He wrote a commentary upon the sentences of Peter Lombard, and another upon Aristotle's metaphysics. For his profound knowledge of philosophy and theology, he obtained the title of the *Irrefragable Doctor*. *Stephen Langton*, who, in 1207, was consecrated archbishop of Canterbury. He is said to have been inferior to none of his contemporaries in the knowledge of the Aristotelian dialectics, or in the application of them to the doctrines of Scripture. The first division of the books of the Old and New Testament into chapters is ascribed to him.³⁵ *Vincent*, a monk of Beavais, who, under the patronage of the king of France, about the year 1244, wrote a famous summary of knowledge, or Encyclopedia, under the title of *Speculum doctrinale, historiale, naturale, et morale*, "A doctrinal, historical, natural, and moral Mirror," which is chiefly valuable for quo-

³⁴ Hen. Gandav. c. 46. p. 126. Trithem. de S. E. c. 457. 8. p. 111. Oudin. de S. E. t. iii. p. 451. Fab. Bib. Lat. Med. t. i. p. 170. Bayle.

³⁵ Pits. p. 304.

tations from authors whose writings are now lost. *Alfred*, who translated many of the physical writings of Aristotle. And *Robert Greathead*,²⁶ bishop of Lincoln, whom Roger Bacon, for his learning and wisdom, ranked with Aristotle and Solomon; and whose name deserves particular honour, on account of the freedom with which he censured the avarice and tyranny of the court of Rome, in a letter to Pope Innocent the Fourth. He wrote a commentary upon the works of Dionysius the Areopagite, and many other pieces.

The *Second Age* of the Scholastic philosophy, in which Aristotelian metaphysics, obscured by passing through the Arabian channel, were applied with wonderful subtlety to the elucidation of Christian doctrine, began with Albert, and ended with Durand.

*Albert*²⁷ was born at Lawingen, in Suabia, in the year 1193, and became a Dominican friar in 1221: from this time he was an instructor of youth, first at Cologne, where he acquired great reputation, and afterwards at Paris. In the year 1260, he was appointed bishop of Ratisbon; but, finding the labours of the episcopal office inconsistent with his love of retirement and study, after three years he resigned this dignity, and returned to a monastic life. He remained in the monastery at Cologne till his death, which happened in the year 1280, at the age of eighty-seven. In the subtleties of the times, and in the ingenious application of these to theology, Albert was excelled by none of his contemporaries; but it is more to his credit to add, that the age produced few men equally skilled in natural history, natural philosophy, and chemistry. He is said to have constructed a machine which sent forth distinct vocal sounds: at which Thomas Aquinas was so much terrified, that he struck it with his stick, and broke it, to the great mortification of Albert, who had been thirty years in bringing this curious machine to perfection. In this age of profound ignorance, with respect to the powers of nature and art, it is no wonder that a man who was capable

²⁶ Balaens, t. iii. p. 260. Godwin de Præsul. Aug. p. 348. Blount. Cons. p. 408.

²⁷ Vinc. Justin. in Vit. Alb. Trithem. Ann. Hirs. t. i. p. 592. Chron. Spanheim. Ann. 1254. Lang. Chron. 1258. Bayle.

of producing such a machine should commonly pass for a magician.³⁸ Albert is also said to have suddenly reproduced the flowers of spring in the midst of winter, for the entertainment of the emperor William, when he visited Cologne. What this ingenious philosopher really did, or how far he was indebted to the arts of deception in this and other wonderful performances, it is difficult to determine; one thing is very certain, that had he lived in a more enlightened age, he would neither have had the honour, nor the discredit, of being thought to have performed his curious feats by the aid either of God, or of evil spirits. Albert wrote many works in logic, ethics, metaphysics, theology, and astronomy: the books ascribed to him were published in twenty-one volumes in folio, at Lyons, in the year 1615. His treatises on speculative science are written in the abstract and subtle manner of the age; those on natural subjects contain some gems, which would perhaps, even in the present age, repay the labour of searching for them. His Commentaries on Aristotle are of little value, on account of his ignorance of the Greek language and the ancient philosophy. His style is gothic and barbarous.

Though ignorance and superstition gave Albert the surname of Great, he was not only rivalled, but far exceeded, in fame by his pupil *Thomas Aquinas*, commonly distinguished by the appellation of the *Angelical Doctor*. Thomas Aquinas,³⁹ of the illustrious family of Aquino, in the Terra di Lavoro, in Italy, was born in the year 1224. At five years of age he was sent for education to Mount Cassino, whence, after he had acquired the elements of learning, he was removed to the university of Naples. Here his fondness for a retired and studious life induced him to enter himself, without the knowledge of his parents, among the Dominicans, in the order of the Preaching Friars. His mother was much offended at this step, and took great pains to obtain an interview with him, in order, if possible, to disengage him from this society. The monks,

³⁸ Naude Apol. Mag. Acc. c. 18. p. 370. Paschius de Inv. c. vii. § 43.

³⁹ G. de Thoco Vit. Aquin. in Act. S. T. iii. p. 656. Fabr. t. iii. p. 502. Oudin. de S. E. t. iii. p. 250. Laun. de Fort. Ar. c. x. p. 213. Bulæi Hist. Ac. Par. p. 433.

who were loth to part with a youth of such distinction and ability, that they might keep him from her sight, removed him from one place to another. But at last, as they were conducting him to Paris, her other sons seized him on his way, and conveyed him to her castle, where he was confined for two years. Still, however, he resisted the importunities and the threats of his mother; and persisting in his purpose of devoting himself to a monastic life, he let himself down from a window, in the night, and by the help of sundry Dominican brethren, who were apprized of his design, he escaped to Naples. After changing his place of residence several times, he became a disciple of Albert, at Cologne. Under this eminent preceptor, though not favoured by nature with ready talents, he was enabled, by patient assiduity, to make great attainments. Among his fellow-students, his silence and apparent dulness procured him the contemptuous appellation of the Dumb Ox. Albert, however, who penetrated further into the mind of his pupil, said, "This ox, if he begin to bellow, will fill the whole world with his roaring."⁴⁰ At length Thomas Aquinas, having made himself master of the dialectics, philosophy, and theology of the age, became an eminent teacher at Paris, where he was created doctor in divinity, in the year 1256. After a few years he returned to Italy, and spent the remainder of his days at Naples, where he continued his lectures in theology. A council being summoned at Lyons, by Gregory X. in the year 1272, for the purpose of uniting the Greek and Latin church, Thomas Aquinas was sent thither, to present to the fathers in council a book, which he had written by order of Pope Urban IV. to refute the errors of the Greek church. On his way, he was seized with a violent disorder, and died in the monastery of Fossa Nova, in Campania, in the year 1274.

The whole western world, after his decease, began to load the memory of Thomas Aquinas with honours. The Dominican fraternity removed his body to Thoulouse; Pope John XXII. canonized him; Pius V. gave him the title of the *Fifth Doctor of the Church*; the learned world

⁴⁰ R. Fulgosus apud Horn. Hist. p. l. iv. c. 4.

honoured him with the appellation of *The Universal and the Angelic Doctor*; and the vulgar believed that many miracles were wrought at his tomb, and said, that the soul of Augustine had passed into Thomas Aquinas.⁴¹

Notwithstanding all the extravagant praises and honours which have been heaped upon Thomas Aquinas, it is however certain, that his learning was almost wholly confined to Scholastic theology; and that he was so little conversant with elegant and liberal studies, that he was not even able to read the Greek language. For all his knowledge of the Peripatetic philosophy, which he so liberally mixed with theology, he was indebted to the defective translations of Aristotle which were supplied by the Arabians, till he obtained, from some unknown hand, a more accurate version of his philosophical writings.⁴² Adopting the general ideas of the age, that theology is best defended by the weapons of logic and metaphysics, he mixed the subtleties of Aristotle with the language of Scripture and the Christian fathers; and, after the manner of the Arabians, framed abstruse questions, without end, upon various topics of speculative theology. His most celebrated writings are, his *Summa Theologiæ*, "Heads of Theology," of which the second section, which treats of morals, may be read with advantage; his Commentaries upon the Analytics, Metaphysics, and Ethics of Aristotle, and upon his book *De Interpretatione*.

Another Scholastic of great celebrity in this age was Bonaventure,⁴³ of Tuscany, born in the year 1221. Being early devoted by his mother to a religious life, he entered into the Franciscan order, in the year 1243. He studied philosophy and theology at Paris, where he acquired so much distinction in Scholastic learning, that he was appointed to read public lectures, was admitted doctor, and soon after created head of his order. Pope Gregory X.

⁴¹ Ptolomæus Lucensis ap. Ouden. t. iii. p. 259. Sextus Senens. Bibl. S. l. iv.

⁴² Trithem. c. 467. p. 117. Aventin. Ann. l. vi. p. 566. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. ii. p. 172. Op. Edit. Rom. 1570. Venet. 1594. Antwerp. 1612. Paris, 1640. tom. xvii.

⁴³ Hen. Gandav. c. 47. p. 126. Trithem. c. 464. p. 112. Ann. Hirs. t. i. p. 615. Acta S. t. iii. p. 811. Anton. Spec. Hist. p. iii. tit. 24. c. 1.

having previously given him a seat among the cardinals, invited him to the general council at Lyons. In this assembly, Bonaventure greatly distinguished himself by his learning and erudition; but during the council he died suddenly, in the year 1274. His funeral was attended by the pope, the Latin emperor Baldwin the Second, in person; the emperor of the Greeks in his representatives, the Greek nobles; James, king of Arragon; the patriarchs of Constantinople and Antioch; five hundred prelates, and many other persons of high rank, both ecclesiastics and laics. After his death, Bonaventure was distinguished by the high appellation of *The Seraphic Doctor*, and he was canonized by Pope Sextus the Fourth, in 1482.

Though Bonaventure was well acquainted with the Scholastic philosophy, he chiefly addicted himself to mystic theology, and the enthusiastic worship of the Virgin Mary. His writings are almost entirely theological.⁴³ His treatise, *De reductione Artium ad Theologiam*,⁴⁴ "On the Application of Learning to Theology," affords a curious specimen of the manner in which the mystical divines transferred the Scholastic philosophy to theology. Human knowledge he divides into three branches, logical, physical, and moral. Each of these he considers as the effect of supernatural illumination, and as communicated to men through the medium of the Holy Scriptures. The whole doctrine of Scripture he reduces to three heads—that which respects the eternal generation and incarnation of Christ, the study of which is the peculiar province of the doctors of the church; that which concerns the conduct of life, which is the subject of preaching; and that which relates to the union of the soul with God, which is peculiar to the monastic and contemplative life. Physical knowledge he applies to the doctrine of Scripture emblematically. For example: the production of the idea of any sensible object from its archetype, is a type of the generation of the *Logos*; the right exercise of the senses typifies the virtuous conduct of life; and the pleasure derived from the senses represents the union of the soul with God. In like manner, logical philosophy furnishes an

⁴³ Fabric. Bibl. Lat. Med. t. iv. p. 121.

⁴⁴ T. i. Opuscula, Lugd. 1647. fol. t. vi. Op. Ed. Rom.

emblem of the eternal Generation and the Incarnation of Christ: a word conceived in the mind resembling the Eternal Generation; its expression in vocal sounds, the Incarnation. Thus the multiform wisdom of God, according to this mystical writer, lies concealed through all nature; and all human knowledge may, by the help of allegory and analogy, be spiritualized and transferred to theology. How wide a door this method of philosophizing opens to every kind of absurdity, the reader will easily perceive from this specimen.

Of a very different and much higher character than Bonaventure, or any other mere Scholastic, was that great man, *Roger Bacon*,⁴⁵ whose deep penetration into the mysteries of nature justly entitled him, in the ignorant age in which he lived, to the appellation of *The Wonderful Doctor*. He was born at Ilchester, in Somersetshire, in the year 1214. At Oxford, he studied grammar, rhetoric, and logic, under Richard Fisacre, and under Edmund Rich, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury; after which, according to the custom of the times, he visited Paris, to attend upon the lectures of the celebrated professors of that University. But it may be easily collected from the particulars which are preserved concerning his early studies, that he was more indebted to his own genius than to any academical instruction: for he read history, learned the oriental and western languages, and studied jurisprudence and medicine; subjects little attended to at this period. The knowledge which he could not obtain from living preceptors, he dug, with indefatigable industry, out of the mines of Grecian and Arabian learning. After having been admitted to the degree of Doctor, Roger Bacon returned to England, and in the year 1240, that he might prosecute his studies without interruption, devoted himself to the monastic life in the order of St. Francis. He employed his time, not in the idle controversies of the age, but in useful researches into the properties of natural bodies. By the help of mathematical learning and experiment, he acquired a degree of knowledge in physics, which astonished his igno-

⁴⁵ Wood Ant. Ox. p. 136. Leland. c. 236. Balæi. Hist. Ac. Cent. iv. 65. Bayle. Cave Hist. Lit. p. 648. Oudin. t. iii. p. 190. Borrich. de Orig. Chem. p. 123.

rant contemporaries, and brought upon him the charge of practising magical arts. His writings discover an acquaintance with the laws of mechanics, statics, and optics, with the chemical properties of bodies, and other subjects of natural philosophy, which could only have been the result of a judicious and indefatigable exertion of wonderful powers. He was certainly acquainted with the composition of gunpowder long before it is commonly said to have been invented by Barthold Schwartz.⁴⁶ He speaks of a kind of inextinguishable fire prepared by art, which must have been a species of phosphorus. He was master of many other curious processes in chemistry, and would, doubtless, have produced still greater discoveries in this branch of science, had he not been drawn aside from the path of true science by the philosophical *ignis fatuus*, which led philosophers of this time to attempt the transmutation of inferior metals into gold. He describes concave and convex lenses, and knew how to use the latter for telescopic and microscopic purposes. His mathematical and astronomical knowledge appeared in the discovery which he made of the error which occasioned the Gregorian reformation in the calendar, and in his attempt to square the circle. Nor was this great man less distinguished by his knowledge of theology, and his skill in the Hebrew and Greek languages, as appears from his epistle to Clement IV. in praise of the sacred Scriptures.⁴⁷

The astonishing powers and performances of Roger Bacon, at the same time that they excited universal admiration, kindled a spirit of envy and jealousy among the monks of his fraternity, who industriously circulated a report that he held converse with evil spirits. This rumour at length reached the ears of the pope; and he was obliged, in order to exculpate himself from the charge of necromancy, to send, in the year 1266, his philosophical writings and instruments to Rome, that it might appear to his holiness by what means he had been able to accomplish such wonders. The storm which was gathering around him was thus for a while dispersed; but in the year 1278, whilst he was in

⁴⁶ Morhoff. Polyh. t. ii. l. ii. c. 38. § 3.

⁴⁷ Ejus Epist. de Secret. Art. et Nat. Oper. Ed. Par. 1542. Basil, 1593. Hamb. 1618. Hody de Bibl. Text. origin. p. 419.

France, the same charge was renewed by Jerom de Escal, the head of the order of Minors, who forbade his fraternity to read the works, and obtained from Pope Nicholas IV. an order that the author should be imprisoned. During his confinement, Bacon wrote a treatise "On the Means of avoiding the Infirmities of Old Age," which he addressed to the pope. Through the intercession of some of his countrymen, he was at length released from his confinement, and permitted to return to England. He passed the last days of his life at Oxford, and died in the year 1294, at the age of seventy-eight, leaving behind him many valuable writings, and an immortal reputation, as, beyond all comparison, the greatest man of his time. Several of his pieces were burnt in the Franciscan library, during the tumults at the Reformation. Among those which remain are some which respect metaphysical and moral subjects; particularly the following—"On the Four Universal Causes of all Human Ignorance;" "On Perfect Wisdom;" "Of Moral Philosophy;" "On Divine Wisdom;" "Of Being and Essence;" "Of the true Character, and the Hindrances of Wisdom," &c. whence it appears that Bacon, even upon these subjects, went far beyond his contemporaries in inquiries directed towards the improvement of the mind.

After Friar Bacon, it may seem of little consequence to mention, among the philosophers of this age, *Ægidius de Columna*,* a Roman monk of the Augustine order, who was preceptor to the sons of Philip III. of France, and who taught philosophy and theology in the University of Paris, with so much reputation, that he was honoured with the appellation of *The most Profound Doctor*. After being advanced to the archbishopric of Berri, he died, in the year 1316, leaving behind upon his monument, the character of *lux in lucem reducens dubia*, the luminary that brought dark things to light. Nevertheless, it appears from those more faithful memorials, his writings, that he treated the abstruse questions of the Aristotelian and Scholastic philosophy with such profound obscurity, that it is impossible to read his works without suspecting, that he did not himself always understand his own meaning.

* Corn. Curtius Elog. Vir. Illust. p. 61. Sammarthan. in Gall. Christ. t. i. p. 179. Bulsei Hist. t. iii. p. 671.

In the subtleties of Scholastic philosophy no one acquired a more distinguished name than *John Duns Scotus*.⁴⁹ The place of his birth is uncertain, but it is most probable that he was born at Dunstan, near Alnwick, in Northumberland. He was educated at Merton Hall, in Oxford; and was admitted to the highest honours in the University of Paris, in the year 1304. At first he was a follower of Thomas Aquinas; but differing from his master on the question concerning the efficacy of Divine grace, he formed a distinct sect, and this separation produced the denominations of the Thomists and Scotists, which still subsist in some of the Roman Catholic schools. Some ascribe to him the introduction of the question concerning the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary. In the year 1308, Duns Scotus was sent, by the head of the fraternity of Minors, of which he was a member, to teach theology at Cologne; and he was received there with the greatest pomp, and with the highest expectations; but was soon cut off by a sudden death. The exact time of his death, as well as his birth, is unknown. On account of his acuteness in disputation, he was called *The most Subtle Doctor*; but his ingenuity was wholly employed in embarrassing, with new fictions of abstraction, and with other Scholastic chimeras, subjects already sufficiently perplexed. His works are published in twelve volumes.⁵⁰

To these more celebrated names, belonging to the second period of the Scholastic age, we must add those of *Simon of Tournay*,⁵¹ who excelled in chemistry and natural philosophy, and was accused by the monks of his fraternity of heresy and impiety; *Peter D'Apono*,⁵² who was chiefly famous for his pretended skill in the arts of astrology; *Robert de Serbonne*, who about the middle of the thirteenth century founded the theological college of the Sorbonne in Paris; *Francis de Mayro*,⁵³ a French monk, wholly lost in

* Trithem. l. c. c. 416. p. 136. Leland. c. 315. Bal. Scr. Ang. Cent. iv. c. 82. Pita. p. 390. Mackenzie de Vit. Scot. Ser. t. i. p. 215. Vit. Oper. Proem. Fab. Bib. Lat. Med. t. iii. p. 509.

⁴⁹ Lugdun. 1639. fol.

⁵¹ Hen. Gandav. de S. E. c. 24.

⁵² Trithem. l. c. c. 556. Fab. Bib. Lat. Med. t. v. p. 715. Acta Phil. v. iii. p. 374. Nand. Apol. Mag. c. 14. p. 271.

⁵³ Wharton. App. to Cave, p. 11.

abstractions, who wrote, *De Formalitatibus*, "On Formalities;" *De primo Principio*, "On the First Principle;" *De Univocatione entis*, "On Identity;" and a work entitled *Conflatile*, or Various Questions concerning Distinctions, Relations, and Expressions; *Arnaud de Ville Neuve*,⁵⁴ who was devoted to the mysteries of astrology, and practised medicine with great reputation, whose books⁵⁵ were reprobated by the inquisition; and *Peter the Dane*,⁵⁶ celebrated for his skill in astronomical calculations.

In the third age of the Scholastic period, which commences with Durand, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, and continues to the end of the fifteenth, the Scholastic philosophy increased in the number of teachers and learners, in the affectation of subtleties, and in the multiplicity of intricate and trifling disputes, but by no means in the celebrity of its professors. Duns Scotus, and other preceptors of the same cast, having filled the schools with vain subtleties, and established a mode of philosophizing, in which important truth and good sense were lost in unprofitable disputes concerning entities, hæcceities, formalities, relations, and other abstractions, the edge of genius was gradually blunted, the way to knowledge was choked up by thorns and briars, and the very name of philosophy became to the young student an object of terror. There are not wanting, however, in this period, philosophers of sufficient distinction to merit particular notice.

Of these the first is *William Durand*,⁵⁷ of Clermont; a preaching monk, who, for his attainments in philosophical and theological studies, was admitted to the degree of Doctor of Divinity, in the University of Paris, in the year 1313, and was afterwards made bishop of Meaux, by Pope John the Twenty-second. He pursued his way through the thorny paths of Scholastic disputation with such indefatigable perseverance, that he merited the title of the *Most Resolute Doctor*. He was at first a follower of Thomas

⁵⁴ Friend. Hist. Med. p. iii. p. 19.

⁵⁵ Trithem. c. 523.

⁵⁶ Ed. Lugd. 1520. Borrich. de Orig. Chem. p. 128. Bas. 1585. N. Anton. Bib. Hist. Vet. t. ii. p. 74.

⁵⁷ Trithem. c. 567. p. 137. Anton. Sum. Hist. tit. 23. c. 11. § 2. t. iii. p. 681. Laun. de Causa Durandi. Par. 1638. 8vo. Fabric. l. c. t. iii. p. 204.

Aquinas, but afterwards became a convert to the Scotists, and defended their cause with great acuteness and zeal; which gave so much offence to the Thomists, that one of them, after his death (which happened in the year 1322) honoured him with this epitaph :

Durus Durandus jacet hic sub marmore duro,
An sit salvandus ego nescio, nec quoque curo.

As the author of another Scholastic sect, must be mentioned *William Occam*,⁵⁵ an Englishman, born in the county of Surry. He was a pupil of the most subtle doctor Duns Scotus, and was little inferior to his master in subtlety. The school of the Scotists had, till his time, followed the popular opinion of the Realists; but Occam, probably from an ambition of becoming the head of a separate body, revived the opinions of the Nominalists, and formed a sect under the name of Occamists, which vehemently opposed the Scotists, upon the abstract questions concerning universals, which had been formerly introduced by Rosceline. Whatever be thought of the ingenuity or of the success of Occam in this dispute, he deserves praise for the courage with which he opposed the tyranny of the papal over the civil power, in a book which he wrote *De Potestate Ecclesiastica et Seculare*,⁵⁶ "On the Ecclesiastic and Secular Power." The boldness with which he withstood the encroachments of the Roman see, and censured the corruption of the monks, brought upon him the censure of the pontiff, and obliged him to retire into France till the year 1328; when, under the protection of the emperor, he again maintained the independency of the civil with respect to the ecclesiastical power. And though his opposition to the see of Rome brought upon him a sentence of excommunication, he continued to live in security in the emperor's court, where he died, in the year 1347. He wrote a Commentary upon the Predicables of Porphyry, and the Categories of Aristotle, and many treatises⁵⁷ in Scholastic theology and ecclesiastical law; which, if they be admired for their ingenuity, must at the same time be censured for their

⁵⁵ Leland. c. 326. Bal. Cent. v. c. 18. Pits. p. 457.

⁵⁶ Apud Goldasti Monarchia, t. i. p. 13. ⁵⁷ Fabr. l. c. t. iii. p. 466.

extreme subtlety and obscurity. He obtained the appellation of *The Invincible Doctor*.

One of the most singular geniuses of the fourteenth century was *Richard of Swinshead*, an Englishman, of the monastery of Swinshead, in Lincolnshire; who devoted himself chiefly to mathematical studies, in which he acquired great renown at the University of Oxford. Little is recorded of this mathematician; probably because few have read his works, which chiefly consist of profound and subtle applications of algebraic calculations to physics and metaphysics. He wrote a treatise "Of Astronomical Calculations;" and another entitled "The Calculator,"⁶¹ which is so exceedingly scarce, that it is neither mentioned by any of the writers of the literary history of this period, nor even by that eminent mathematician, Wallis, in his *History of Algebra*. He was certainly a great master of algebraic operations; but injudiciously applied them to subjects which do not admit of this method of investigation, particularly to questions in Scholastic philosophy. Probably, some valuable mathematical knowledge might be gathered up from his *Calculator*, by a reader who should be capable of extracting the pure gold from the heterogeneous mass in which it lies concealed.

Among other disciples of Scotus was *Walter Burley*,⁶² preceptor to Edward the Third. He wrote many treatises in logic, metaphysics, physics, morals, and policy, with such clearness, that he justly obtained the appellation of the *Perspicuous Doctor*. In a treatise *De Vita et Moribus Philosophorum*,⁶³ "On the Life and Manners of Philosophers," he runs over the history of philosophy, in three hundred and thirty-one chapters, from Thales to Seneca; but for want of a more perfect acquaintance with the Greek language, and with ancient philosophy, the work is of little value.

The fifteenth century produced, among other Scholastics, *John Herman Wessel*,⁶⁴ born at Groningen, in 1409, and

⁶¹ Ed. Venet. 1520. Leibn. Ep. ad Wallis in Op. t. iii. p. 678. Scaliger Exercit. 340. p. 1068.

⁶² Voss. de Hist. Lat. l. ii. p. 515. Leland. c. 378. Pits. p. 435. Fab. l. c. t. i. p. 839.

⁶³ Act. Phil. v. iii. p. 283.

⁶⁴ Suffr. Petri de Scr. Fris. dec. viii. p. 46. Adami Vit. Phil. p. 21. Goetz. Diss. Lub. 1719.

educated in the monastery at Zevole. He not only studied the Greek language, by the help of the Dominican friars, who about this time passed over to the West from Constantinople, but obtained, from certain learned Jews, a knowledge of the Hebrew, Chaldaic, and Arabic tongues. Having been early instructed in the Scholastic disputes, and having acquired by his industry an uncommon share of biblical learning, he taught philosophy and philology with great applause at Groningen. But his chief claim to distinction in the history of philosophy arises from the penetration which, in the midst of the Scholastic frenzy of his age, enabled him to discover the futility of the controversies which agitated the schools of the Thomists, Scotists, and Occamists. To a young man who consulted him concerning the best method of prosecuting his studies, he said, "You, young man, will live to see the day, when the doctrines of Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, and other modern disputants of the same stamp, will be exploded by all true Christian divines, and when the Irrefragable Doctors themselves will be little regarded." A prediction which discovers so much good sense and liberality, that Wessel ought to be immortalized under the appellation of the *Wise Doctor*. He died at Groningen in 1489, about the era of the Revival of Letters.⁶⁵

* Vidend. Lambert. Danaeus Proleg. Sentent. Genev. 1580. Binder. de Theol. Schol. Tub. 1624. Himmelius de Theol. Schol. Thomas Hist. Sap. et Stult. t. iii. p. 225. Barthold. Niemeir. Orat de Scholast. Helmst. 1675. Tribbechovius de D. Schol. Jen. 1719. Morhoff. Polyh. t. ii. l. i. c. 13. Roderici Specul. Hum. Vitæ. Rapin Reflexions sur la Philosophie, Op. t. ii. p. 340. Oudin. de S. E. t. ii. p. 996. Launois de Schol. cœl. c. 45. Gandavenses, c. 30. Bulæi Hist. Univ. Par. Ann. 1101. 1111. 1116. Fabric. Bib. Lat. Med. t. i. p. 787. t. v. p. 689. 753. 801. t. iii. p. 345. 499. 540. Pezii Anecd. t. iii. p. ii. p. 627. Martene Anecd. t. v. p. 1156. Par. 1717. Labbei, Cavei, Pagi Annal. De Visch. Bibl. Script. Ord. Cisterc. Leyser Hist. Poet. Med. Ævi, p. 765. Elswich. de Fatis Arist. in Schol. Prot. Bayle. Wadding. Bibl. Ord. Men. Waræus de Script. Hiberniæ.

SECT. III.

Of the Nature and Character of the Scholastic Philosophy.

HAVING related the history of the Scholastics, who flourished from the eleventh to the beginning of the sixteenth century, it remains that we delineate the features of the Scholastic philosophy, that the reader may be enabled to form an accurate idea of its nature and constitution. This inquiry is the more necessary, as the history of religion is so intimately interwoven with that of philosophy, during this period, that the former cannot be understood without a knowledge of the latter.

We have already seen, in general, whence this philosophy sprung, and what causes concurred to promote its establishment and extension. It has been shewn, that from the study of the Stoic and Peripatetic philosophy, blended with theological speculations, arose a vast and confused mass of opinions and questions, which were for ages canvassed in subtle, but vain and fruitless disputations; and that this polemic spirit was greatly encouraged by the example of the Arabians, and by the high repute and general circulation of their writings, particularly those of Averroës, till, in process of time, the evil rose to so great an height, that sober reason was lost in subtlety, and the simple doctrine of religion buried in the refinements of false philosophy.⁶⁶

To follow the Scholastics in detail, through the mazes of their subtle speculations, would be to lose the reader in a labyrinth of words. We must refer those who wish for this kind of entertainment to the writings of Albert, Thomas Aquinas, Scotus, and Occam; where they will soon discover that these wonderful doctors amused themselves and their followers, by raising up phantoms of abstraction in the field of truth, the pursuit of which would be as fruitless a labour as that of tracing elves and fairies in their midnight gambols. A brief review of their method of philosophizing is

⁶⁶ Conf. Thomas de Caus. Inept. Schol. Præfat. 82. p. 544. Hist. Sap. p. iii. p. 226. Tribbechov. de D. Scholast. cum Præf. Hermanni.

all that is practicable, and all that the intelligent reader will desire, in this part of our work.

The leading character of the Scholastic philosophy was, that it employed itself in an ostentatious display of ingenuity, in which axioms assumed without examination, distinctions without any real difference, and terms without any precise meaning, were made use of as weapons of assault and defence, in controversies upon abstruse questions, which, after endless skirmishes, it was impossible to bring to an issue, and which, notwithstanding all the violence of the contest, it was of no importance to determine. The Scholastic logic is not to be confounded with the genuine art of reasoning, from which it differs, as much as dross from pure gold. These disputants made use of dialectics, not to assist the human understanding in discovering truth conducive to the happiness of man, but to secure to themselves the honours of conquest in the field of controversy. John of Salisbury complains,⁵⁷ that the scholars of his time consumed, not ten or twenty years, but their whole lives, in these disputes; and that when, through old age, they became incapable of any other amusement or pleasure, these dialectic questions still dwelt upon their tongues, and dialectic books still remained in their hands.

It is scarcely to be conceived with what ardour, approaching even to madness, the first geniuses of the age applied to this kind of study. Losing themselves in a wood of abstract conceptions and subtle distinctions, the further they proceeded the greater was the darkness and confusion, till at length, what was commonly called philosophy no longer deserved the name. Ludovicus Vives, one of the most intelligent writers of the sixteenth century, speaking of the Scholastic philosophy, says,⁵⁸ "From the writings of Aristotle they have selected, not the most useful, but the most intricate and unprofitable parts; not his books of Natural History or his Problems, but his Physics, and those treatises which most resemble theirs in subtlety and obscurity; for example, his Books upon the First Philosophy, upon Heaven, and upon Generation. For as to the treatise on Meteors, they are so entirely unacquainted with

⁵⁷ Metalog. l. ii. c. 10. p. 805. Conf. Lud. Vives de Corrupt. Art. l. iii. p. 112.

⁵⁸ L. c. l. v. p. 166.

the subject, that it seems to have been admitted among the Scholastic books rather by accident than design. The truth is, that these philosophers are less acquainted with nature than husbandmen or mechanics; and so much offended are they with that Nature which they do not understand, that they have framed for themselves another nature, which God never framed, consisting of formalities, hæcceities, realities, relations, Platonic ideas, and other subtleties, which they honour with the name of the *metaphysical world*; and if any man has a turn of mind averse to the study of real nature, but adapted to the pursuit of these visionary fictions, they say, he is possessed of a sublime genius."

The topics upon which these philosophers spent the whole force of their ingenuity, were of a kind at once the most difficult and abstruse, and the most trifling and useless. Intention and remission, proportion and degree, infinity, formality, quiddity, individuality, and other abstract ideas, furnished innumerable questions to exercise their subtlety. Not contented with considering properties and relations as they subsist, and are perceived, in natural objects, they separated, in their conceptions, the former from the latter, and by this artifice transferred them into universal notions. Then forgetting that these notions are merely the offspring of the reasoning mind, they considered them as real entities, and made use of them as substantial principles in explaining the nature of things. This they did, not only in metaphysics but in physics, in which these imaginary entities confused and obscured all their reasonings. If these creatures of abstraction be brought back to their natural connexion with real objects, and with the terms which express them, it will appear, that they had nothing more than an imaginary existence, and the whole contest concerning them will vanish into a mere war of words. Whence some judgment may be formed concerning the value of this most profound, angelic, and seraphic philosophy.

The opinion of Vives upon this subject merits attention:^a "Some maintain, that studies of this kind are useful to prepare the way for other kinds of learning, by sharpening the ingenuity of the student; and that those who understand these subtle questions, will the more easily acquire a know-

^a L. c. l. iii. p. 129.

ledge of less difficult subjects: but neither of these assertions is true. One reason why questions of this kind are thought ingenious is, that they are not understood; for it is not uncommon for men to admire what they do not comprehend, and to think that most profound which they are not able to fathom. In the opinion of many, however, these enigmatical subtleties are only to be ranked among the trifling amusements of children; being, in truth, not the produce of an understanding exercised and improved by erudition, but springing up in an unoccupied mind, from an ignorance of better things, like useless weeds in an uncultivated soil." To the same purpose Lord Bacon, with his usual strength of judgment, says,⁷⁰ "As many natural bodies, whilst they are still entire, are corrupted, and putrify, so the solid knowledge of things often degenerates into subtle, vain, and silly speculations, which, although they may not seem altogether destitute of ingenuity, are insipid and useless. This kind of unsound learning, which preys upon itself, has often appeared, particularly among the Scholastics, who, having much leisure, quick parts, and little reading; being in mind as closely confined to the writings of a few authors, and especially of their dictator, Aristotle, as they are in body to the cells of their monasteries; and being, moreover, in a great measure, ignorant of the history both of nature and of the world; out of very flimsy materials, but with the most rapid and violent motion of the shuttle of thought, they have woven those laborious webs which are preserved in their writings. The truth is, that the human mind, when it is employed upon external objects, is directed in its operations by the nature of the materials upon which its faculties are exercised: but if, like the spider, it draws its materials from within itself, it produces cobwebs of learning, wonderful indeed from the fineness of the threads, and the delicacy of the workmanship, but of no real value or use."⁷¹

The general prevalence of this taste for subtle speculations among the Scholastics, is certainly to be accounted for, chiefly from the want of more important objects to oc-

⁷⁰ De Aug. Scient. t. i. Op. l. i. c. 9.

⁷¹ Conf. I. Ang. Chrop. Ciz. t. i. p. 305. Pistor. p. 836. Erasmi Encom. Moræ.

cupy the leisure of monastic life, and to furnish occasions of generous and useful emulation among those who devoted their days to study. But the particular direction which this idle humour took was owing to the universal authority which, after Augustine, Aristotle, in the manner already explained, by degrees acquired in the Christian schools. The reverence, almost religious, which the Scholastics paid to the Stagyræite, naturally led them to follow implicitly his method of philosophizing, and to embrace his opinions, as far as they were able to discover them. "There are," says Vives,⁷² "both philosophers and divines, who not only say that Aristotle reached the utmost boundaries of science, but that his syllogistic method of reasoning is the most direct and certain path to knowledge; a presumption which has led us to receive, upon the authority of Aristotle, many tenets as fully known and established, which are by no means such; for why should we fatigue ourselves with further inquiry, when it is agreed that nothing can be discovered beyond what may be found in his writings? Hence has sprung up in the minds of men an incredible degree of indolence; so that every one thinks it safest and most pleasant to see with another's eyes, and believe with another's faith, and to examine nothing for himself." There cannot be a clearer proof of the extravagant height to which this *Ἀριστοτελολμανία*, rage for Aristotle, was carried, than the fact complained of by Melancthon,⁷³ that in sacred assemblies the ethics of Aristotle were read to the people instead of the gospel.

Notwithstanding all the homage which was paid to the name of Aristotle, it is certain that the Scholastics were very imperfectly acquainted with the true sense of his writings: for, not to insist at present upon the difficulties which unavoidably attend the study of his works, arising from the abstract nature of the subjects upon which he treats, from the studied ambiguity with which he frequently writes, from the extreme conciseness of his style, and from his obscure and defective report of the opinions of preceding philosophers, it must be recollected, that these philosophers engaged in the study of Aristotle without a pre-

⁷² L. c. l. v. p. 161.⁷³ Apol. A. C. p. 62.

vious acquaintance with history, or with the Greek philosophy, and even without the knowledge of the Greek language, and saw the doctrines of their master through the obscure medium of very imperfect translations. Hence they never understood his whole system in connexion, and often created monstrous forms, at which the Stagyrte himself would have been terrified.

The Scholastic philosophy, thus introduced, and supported by the authority of Aristotle, derived its complete establishment from the firm alliance into which it entered with theology, and the honours and emoluments which were, in consequence of this alliance, bestowed upon those who excelled in this kind of learning. Dialectics having been found an useful instrument in establishing the prevailing theological system, eminence in this art became the sure road to ecclesiastical preferment. Almost all the great men, who have been mentioned in the preceding chapter, rose to distinction through their knowledge of subtle questions in metaphysics, and through their adroitness in wielding the weapons of logic. Excellence in the Scholastic art of trifling was not only sufficient to procure the high titles of Most Profound, Subtle, Resolute, Wonderful, Angelic, or Seraphic Doctor, but to create professors, abbots, bishops, cardinals, and even pontiffs. What wonder that the Scholastic philosophy universally prevailed?

The effects of its prevalence were of the most serious nature. Besides the extravagant waste of time which these disputes occasioned, they introduced an absurd kind of vanity, which persuaded these Sublime Doctors to believe that they had arrived at the summit of wisdom, both human and Divine, and gave occasion to violent contests, which often terminated in something worse than a mere war of words. Theology, already sufficiently clouded and corrupted by the speculations and disputes of former ages, by admitting into its service Scholastic philosophy involved itself in new obscurity; so that at length, instead of the plain and simple doctrine of religion, little else was to be found in the writings of theologians, but vague notions and verbal distinctions. As an example of the mischief which arose to theology from this alliance, we may mention the doctrine of Transubstantiation, which first sprung up

at this period, and concerning which the most violent disputes arose between Berengar and his heretical partizans on the one side, and Lanfranc and his orthodox brethren on the other, till at length this absurd dogma passed into an article of faith.

Another evil which arose from the Scholastic philosophy was, that instead of attempting to distinguish the real differences of things, and to deduce clear conclusions from certain principles, in order to enlarge the boundaries of human knowledge, it employed all the powers of ingenuity, and all the arts of sophistry, to obscure the principles of science, to mix truth with fallacy, and to open the door to universal scepticism. By the help of confused notions, unmeaning distinctions, barbarous terms, and a sophistical method of reasoning, men were prepared to advance and defend the most frivolous and absurd positions; both theological and philosophical disputations degenerated into a mere trial of skill; and the honest inquirer after truth was left without any certain guide. The consequences were, that tenets destructive of all religion were often publicly maintained in the schools; a corrupt system of moral philosophy, which left open many avenues to dishonesty and debauchery, was taught; and great depravity of manners prevailed.

This corruption of opinions and manners was accompanied with barbarism of language. Little attention was now paid to the study of grammar or rhetoric; a vast mass of terms, wholly unknown in the Augustan age, was introduced into the Latin tongue, to express the abstract notions of dialectics and metaphysics; and a verbose, puerile, and inelegant mode of writing generally prevailed. John of Salisbury, who took much pains to revive an attention to literature, complained,⁷⁴ that, in his time, those who professed to be acquainted with all arts, both liberal and mechanic, and to teach them in a short time, neglected the study of grammar; whence they were ignorant of the first art, without which it is in vain that any one attempts to become master of the rest. Even the best writers of this period were not wholly free from literary barbarism.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Metal. l. i. c. 24.

⁷⁵ Lud. Viv. l. c. l. ii. p. 78.

After this general view of the nature, causes, and effects of the Scholastic philosophy,⁷⁶ the reader may perceive, that it would be a most irksome and unprofitable labour to attend these subtle doctors through all the winding paths, in which they wandered from the straight road of simple truth and common sense. The immense variety of their questions, the incomprehensible subtlety of their distinctions, and the uncertainty and obscurity of their mode of reasoning, render it an impracticable task to give a clear and connected view of the doctrines of the Scholastic philosophy. Or if it were possible to pour the light of order upon this chaos, the result would be nothing more than the repetition of Aristotle's dialectics and metaphysics, clothed in barbarous terms and phrases, and encumbered with a vast addition of puerile trifles, and visionary fictions, which it would be an unpardonable abuse of the reader's patience to retail. A few words concerning the manner in which the Scholastics taught logic and metaphysics, physics, politics, and morals, and concerning their sects, shall conclude this part of our work.

Although Logic and Metaphysics were the peculiar province of the Scholastics, their labours in these branches of learning were of little use. Their logic⁷⁷ was rather the art of sophistry than that of reasoning: for it was applied to subjects which they did not understand, and employed upon principles which were not ascertained. Their whole business being disputation, they sought out for such thorny questions as were likely to afford them sufficient exercise for their ingenuity. Their whole care was to conduct themselves in the contest by the rules of art, and their whole ambition to obtain the victory. For want of clear principles, and accurate definitions, their metaphysical system was a chaos of abstract notions and obscure terms. They professed, indeed, to follow the metaphysics of Aristotle, but for want of understanding the ancient doctrines of physics and mathematics, or even the language of Aristotle, they frequently substitute the fictions of their own imaginations in the room of the true Aristotelian principles.

⁷⁶ Conf. Laun. de Fort. Aris. Act. Phil. v. iii. p. 921. Matt. Paris, ad Ann. 1201.

⁷⁷ Lud. Viv. l. c. l. iii. p. 111. 128. L. v. p. 177.

Of this the manner in which they handled the subject of First Matter affords a clear example. The Stagyrte, in his metaphysics, had called Matter, that of which, considered in itself, neither quantity nor quality can be predicated, and in which being terminates. In this definition Aristotle had a reference to the ancient doctrine, that bodies are composed of corpuscles; and, by mental abstraction, separated from these that which is the first formal cause of their existence, and called it First Matter. But the Scholastics, being ignorant of the ancient notion of body, and confounding the purely metaphysical conception of matter with an extended subject endued with form and quantity, fell into trifling disputes, and devised innumerable subtleties, by which the original obscurity of the doctrine of Aristotle concerning the first matter was greatly increased. The first matter, according to the followers of Thomas Aquinas, was simple power without actual energy. Others, who perceived that this was a mere phantom of the imagination, defended the real existence of matter, though they confessed themselves ignorant of its nature. Whilst others, concluding that the attributes ascribed to matter could belong only to God, contended that God was the first matter. Nor did these subtle reasoners trifle less on the subject of Divine and spiritual natures. Bonaventure, in his Compendium of Theology, treats of angels, their substance, orders, offices, language, and the like, as if he himself had been an inhabitant of the angelic world.

In Natural Philosophy, instead of attending to the real properties of bodies, and investigating the laws of nature by experiment and observation, they reasoned with subtlety upon vague and obscure principles, and always confounded physics with metaphysics. Many reasonings of this kind may be met with in those parts of the writings of Thomas Aquinas, where he treats of the principles of nature, of the nature of matter, of the occult operations of nature, and the like.⁷⁸ Among other profound observations, he derives the occult operations of nature from the forms of things, which exist in their respective bodies, and supposes the formal principles of such bodies to be

⁷⁸ Opusc. p. 213.

celestial bodies, which by their accession or recession cause the production or corruption of the inferior body. Whence he concludes, that there is in these occult forms a capacity of being restored to higher principles, namely, celestial bodies, or to powers still higher than these, that is, to separate intellectual substances, which in their respective operations leave traces of themselves. If the reader will apply the mysterious operations of these occult forms to the explanation of magnetic attractions, he will soon perceive how much the science of physics is indebted to this angelic doctor. Bonaventure,⁷⁹ and others, laboured in this field with equal success. Roger Bacon, indeed, Albert, and a few more, in their inquiries into nature, left the clouds of metaphysics, and descended into the humble vale of experience; but the world was not prepared to receive the information they were able to communicate, and imputed their operations to the power of magic. Boniface, the patron of ignorance and barbarism, summoned Polydore Virgil, bishop of Salisbury, to the court of inquisition, for maintaining the existence of Antipodes; for this profound theologian wisely concluded, that such a race of men would be a new world for which Christ had not died.⁸⁰

Upon the subject of Ethics, we find among the Scholastics surprising proofs of ignorance and weakness. Till the twelfth century, the only books of morals which obtained any authority were that wretched compilation, the *Moralia* of Pope Gregory, and some other injudicious collections of sentences from the Scriptures and the writings of the Fathers. When the Ethics of Aristotle were introduced, and moral doctrine began to be considered as a part of philosophy, we indeed find the Scholastics treating concerning virtues and vices, but always in the dialectic method; substituting useless questions concerning cases which are never likely to happen in real life, in the room of practical inquiries,

Quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Opusc. t. ii. p. 728, ed. Lugd. Conf. Viv. l. v. p. 176.

Aventin. Ann. l. iii. Welser. Ann. Boic. l. v. Bayle, Art. Virg.

⁸¹ What fair or base, what good or ill, to man,
And what his wisest, safest, happiest plan.

If they discoursed upon these topics, they either implicitly followed the definition and arrangement of Aristotle, or injudiciously combined with his moral doctrine the precepts of piety and sanctity which the church had prescribed. The correction and improvement of ethics was indeed attempted by John Scotus Erigena, and other followers of the supposed Dionysius; but these enthusiasts having abandoned the humble path of common sense to soar into the regions of mysticism, the remedy proved scarcely less mischievous than the disease to which it was applied; and the simple doctrine of pure morality, taught by Christ and his apostles, which had hitherto been debased by superstition, was now lost in the extravagances of enthusiasm.

The spirit of disputation which so eminently distinguished the Scholastics, gave birth to many sects, which contended against each other with bitter animosity. The disciples of Albert, called Albertists, who mixed the doctrines of religion with the tenets of the Aristotelian philosophy, were vehemently opposed by Peter Lombard and his followers. The dissensions between Thomas Aquinas and John Duns Scotus laid the foundation of the sects of the Thomists and Scotists, who disputed with great warmth on the doctrines of grace and free will, and other theological topics. From the school of Duns Scotus arose Occam, the inventor of new subtleties, who became the father of the sect of Occamists. But, among all the sects of the Scholastics, the most memorable, on account of the extent, the violence, and the duration of their contests, are those of the Nominalists and Realists.

To understand the ground of the dispute which gave rise to these sects, it will be necessary to recollect the different tenets of the ancient schools of Plato, Aristotle, and Zeno, concerning Ideas, or the universal forms of things. Ideas, according to Plato, are not the universal notions or conceptions of the mind, arising from the contemplation of external objects, but intelligible natures, having a certain and stable existence, whose origin and seat is the Divine Mind, and which are the immediate objects of contemplation to the human understanding. Universal essences of this kind, external to matter, Aristotle thought

to be the mere fictions of the imagination of Plato, or rather of Pythagoras; but, not daring to deny the existence of essential forms, he affirmed that ideas, or forms, were eternally united to matter, and that from this union of matter and form arose existing bodies. Zeno and the Stoic school acknowledged primary principles of material things, but denied their essentiality, and ridiculed those who asserted the substantial existence of ideas or universals, as distinguished from the conceptions of the mind and the words by which they are expressed. This subtle question was pursued by the Eclectic philosophers, who endeavoured to reconcile the Academic, Peripatetic, and Stoic notions concerning it, by supposing, that ideas have a real essentiality, but only in the Divine understanding, where they subsist as models, by means of which, in framing individual bodies, essential characters of things are impressed upon matter, as by one seal similar impressions are made upon innumerable portions of wax; and that these ideas may be contemplated by the human mind, and may be expressed by universal terms. Others left it undetermined whether the universals thus contemplated have a real physical existence. Porphyry, in his introduction to the Aristotelian logic, says,^a "Concerning genera and species, whether they have a real essence, or are barely conceptions of the mind, and if they subsist whether corporeally or incorporeally, whether spiritually or only in the objects of sense, I give no opinion, because the subject is abstruse, and requires a larger discussion." This point, which Porphyry left undetermined, was resumed in the schools, and the opinion of Aristotle, that universals subsist not prior to individual bodies, nor after them, but within them, and are the forms eternally united to matter, which makes bodies to be such as they are, universally prevailed, till, in the eleventh century, Rosceline, before mentioned, adopted the Stoic opinion, that Universals have no real existence either before or in individuals, but are mere names and words by which the kinds of individuals are expressed: a tenet which was after-

^a § 2. p. 2. Ed. Jul. Pacii.

wards propagated by Abelard, and produced the sect of the Nominalists.⁸³

This new opinion gave great offence to the philosophers and divines of the eleventh century, perhaps, chiefly because Rosceline, by applying it to the doctrine of the Trinity, brought upon himself a suspicion of heresy. Many young persons, however, strenuously adhered to the side of the Nominalists, and the sect, through the ingenuity and ability of Abelard and others, obtained many followers.⁸⁴ Some of these, to avoid censure, changed their ground so far as to maintain, that universals consist in notions and conceptions of the mind, formed by abstraction, whence they were called Conceptualists. The Realists, too, were of different opinions, some leaning towards the doctrine of Plato, and others towards that of Aristotle.

In the twelfth century, the controversy still continued; but the doctrine of the Realists found such able supporters in Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus, that it almost became triumphant. But Occam, in the fourteenth century, revived the dying cause of the Nominalists, and gave it such a degree of credit, that after his time it was zealously maintained by Suisset, Buridan, Marsilius ab Inghen, Wessel, and many others. The sect of the Nominalists, enjoying the countenance and favour of Louis the Eleventh, almost universally flourished in Germany; whilst that of the Realists, being patronized by Pope John XXIII. was prevalent in Italy, and other countries; till at length the pope's faction became predominant, and harassed the Nominalists with severe persecutions. Louis XI. king of France, published an edict which, in the year 1474, silenced and banished the Nominalists; ordered their books to be fastened up in the libraries with iron chains, that they might not be read by students; and required the academic youth to renounce their doctrines. Upon this the leaders of the sect fled into Germany and England, where, at the beginning of the Reformation, they

⁸³ Otto Frising. de Gest. Frid. l. i. c. 42. J. Sarisb. Met. l. ii. c. 17. p. 814. Aventin. Ann. Bor. l. vi. p. 396.

⁸⁴ Du Chesne Scr. Hist. Fr. t. iv. p. 632. Hist. Crit. Phil. t. iii. p. 906. Abelard. Hist. Cal. c. 3.

met with a strong reinforcement in Luther, Melancthon, and others.⁸⁵

Nothing could exceed the violence with which these disputes were conducted. Vives, who himself saw these contests, says,⁸⁶ "that when the contending parties had exhausted their stock of verbal abuse, they often came to blows; and it was not uncommon, in these quarrels about universals, to see the combatants engaging, not only with their fists, but with clubs and swords, so that many have been wounded, and some killed." Such were the blessed fruits of Scholastic philosophy! We cannot more properly take leave of this period of our history, than in the words of Martial:

Turpe est difficiles habere nugas,
Et stultus labor est ineptiarum.⁸⁷ *

⁸⁵ Plessis d'Argen. Collect. t. i. p. 202. 255. 302. Bulæi Hist. Ac. Par. t. v. p. 678. 739. 747. Baluz. Misc. t. iv. p. 531. Naud. Add. Hist. Ludov. xi. p. 203. Launois Hist. Gymn. Navarr. t. iv. p. 201.

⁸⁶ L. c. l. i. Conf. Brasm. præf. Enchir. Camer. Vit. Melancth. p. 213. Wood. Ant. Oxon. ad Ann. 1343. Patric. Disc. Perip. t. i. c. 13.

⁸⁷ 'Tis a folly to sweat o'er a difficult trifle,
And for silly devices invention to rife.

* Vidend. Hottinger Hist. Ecc. Sec. xiii. Leyser. Hist. Post. Med. Ævi. Marnix. Apiar. Rom. Ecc. p. i. c. 10. Flacii Carm. de Corrupt. Eccl. Statu. Mabillon de Stud. Monast. p. ii. c. 7. Dupin Meth. Stud. l. iv. Salabert. Phil. Nomin. vind. Par. 1651. 8°. Ars Rationis ad Mentem Nomin. Ox. 1673, 12°. Mabillon Analect. t. iv. p. 369.

BOOK VIII.

OF THE REVIVAL OF PHILOSOPHY.

CHAP. I.

OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE REVIVAL OF LETTERS UPON PHILOSOPHY.

HAVING at length, not without difficulty, cleared our way through the thorns and briars of the Middle Age, we are now arrived at a more open and pleasant country, where we shall see learning and philosophy recovering their ancient honours. This great effect was not produced instantaneously; but, as the twilight precedes the rising sun, so the dawning of literature prepared the way for the revival of science, till, at length, genius was awakened, rational inquiry was resumed, and the night of the Scholastic age was succeeded by a bright day of learning and true philosophy.

In the thirteenth century, a singular but fanciful attempt was made to introduce a new method of philosophizing by *Raymund Lully*,¹ long famous for an invention which is called his Great Art. Lully was born in the island of Majorca, in the year 1234. After passing his younger days in pleasure, he was on a sudden induced, by a disappointment in love, to give himself up to retirement and devotion. In his retreat he boasted of visions and revelations. Forming a romantic design of converting the Mahometans to the Christian faith, about the year 1287, he visited Pope Honorius the Fourth, and the ecclesiastics in Rome, and endeavoured to prevail upon them to assist him in his enterprise, and for this purpose to institute schools for teaching the Oriental languages. Finding his

¹ Bovilli Vit. Lullii. Danat. Hist. Balear.

proposal, however, treated with contempt, he carried it to the courts of Paris, Geneva, and other states; but met with no better success. At last he determined to attempt the execution of his project, with no other resources than those which his own ingenuity and zeal supplied; and undertook a journey into Asia and Africa, where he visited the principal cities, in hope of making converts. After many disappointments and hazards, he returned home; but the ardour of his enthusiasm remained unabated, and he renewed his application to several European princes. Finding no one, however, who was inclined to favour his design, he entered into the fraternity of Franciscan monks, and, inflamed with an invincible thirst after the glory of martyrdom, he went a second time into Africa, whence he had before been permitted to depart only upon condition that he would never return thither. This proved a most unfortunate adventure; for, upon his being again found in this country, he was thrown into prison, where he suffered great torture, and whence he barely escaped with life, through the interest of certain Genoese traders, who took him on board their ship to convey him home. On his passage, when he was just within sight of his native country, he died, in the year 1315. He had the appellation of *The most Enlightened Doctor*.

Wonderful things are related of Lully's chemical and medical skill;² but he is chiefly celebrated for an invention by which he pretended to enable any one mechanically to invent arguments and illustrations upon any subject, and thus to reach the summit of science at a small expense of time and labour. This *Great Art* professes to furnish a general instrument for assisting invention in the study of every kind of science. For this purpose certain general terms, which are common to all the sciences, but principally those of logic, metaphysics, ethics, and theology, are collected and arranged; not however according to any natural division, but merely according to the caprice of the inventor. An alphabetical table of such terms was provided; and subjects and predicates taken from these, were respectively inscribed, in angular spaces, upon circular papers. The essences, qualities, affections, and re-

² Borrich. de Orig. Chem. p. 129. Fabr. Bib. Lat. Med. t. iv. p. 864. N. Anton. Bib. Hisp. Vet. t. ii. p. 84. Bleunt. Cens. p. 420.

tations of things being thus mechanically brought together, the circular papers of subjects were fixed in a frame, and those of predicates were so placed upon them as to move freely, and in their revolutions to produce various combinations of subjects and predicates; whence would arise definitions, axioms, and propositions, varying infinitely, according to the different application of general terms to particular subjects. Such is the general idea of Lully's mechanical logic; the particulars of which it would be wholly uninteresting to detail, since it is very evident, that the invention is perfectly futile; supposing that knowledge of the nature of things, which nevertheless it professes to teach; deriving its rules, not from reason, but from the arbitrary play of the imagination; and furnishing certain repositories of universal notions, without providing any criterion for distinguishing truth from falsehood, or any method of discovering the real properties of things. The great Lullian art, though spoken of by certain writers of this period in the highest terms of panegyric, may therefore safely be pronounced an unprofitable and ridiculous invention, wholly unworthy of notice, except as a specimen of the artifice with which men, who have more ingenuity than honesty, frequently impose upon vulgar weakness and credulity.*

To the fanciful and enthusiastic Lully the philosophical world has few obligations. But other more cultivated and liberal spirits arose about this period, who rendered essential service to mankind, by reviving a taste for learning and science.

In the meritorious design of banishing barbarism, and reviving a taste for polite literature, the Italian poet, *Dante Alighieri*,⁴ appears to have led the way. He was born at Florence, in the year 1265. In his youth he not only applied himself to the study of poetry, and other branches of elegant learning, but, considering the period in which he lived, acquired a correct acquaintance with philosophy.

* Morhoff. Polyh. t. i, c, 5, p. 352. Verulam, Aug. Scient. l. vi. c. 2. Alsted. Clavis Artis Lull. Arg. 1608. Ars magna, Ed. Argent. 1598. 8vo. cum Comment. Agrippæ. Brunon. Lampad. Combin. p. 685. Leibnitz de Arte Combinat. p. 33.

⁴ Hank. de Rom. Scrip. p. ii. c. 42. p. 194.

According to his biographers, he was inferior to none of his age as a philosopher and a poet; in genius he was sublime, in language brilliant, and in reasoning accurate and profound. He studied physics and mathematics at Paris, and wrote a philosophical piece, entitled, *Quæstio de Natura duorum Elementorum Aquæ et Terræ*,⁵ "An Inquiry into the Nature of the Two Elements, Water and Earth." But his chief work is his dramatic satire, "On Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell." On account of the happy influence which his example had upon the taste and studies of the age in which he lived, he may justly be ranked among the first revivers of learning, and reformers of philosophy.

From the school of Dante arose *Francis Petrarch*,⁶ a star of the first magnitude in the Italian hemisphere, who greatly contributed to dissipate the darkness of the fourteenth century. Petrarch was born at Arezzo, in Tuscany, in the year 1304. His father, with many other Italians, who were discontented with their fortune, removed from Florence to the neighbourhood of Avignon, in France, where a Gascon pope had fixed the Roman see. After the example of his master, Petrarch devoted himself chiefly to polite literature. His father in vain endeavoured to draw his attention from these pursuits to the more profitable, but less elegant, study of the law. After various occurrences in life (of which his amour with Laura was an interesting, and his poetical coronation at Rome was a splendid, part), he resided during the later period of his life, sometimes in the celebrated vale of Vaucluse, near Avignon, and sometimes at Argus, near Padua, where, in the year 1374, he died, universally known, esteemed, and regretted. To Petrarch the Latin tongue is chiefly indebted for the restoration of its purity; Italian poetry for its perfection; and even philosophy for a considerable share of improvement. The science of ethics he studied with attention, and clothed many excellent precepts of morality with all the graces of pure and classical language. His treatises, *De Remediis utriusque Fortune*; *de vera Sapientia*; *de Contemptu Mundi*; *de Republica optime administranda*; *de Avaritia*; "On the Remedies of Fortune; True Wisdom; the Contempt of the World;

⁵ Fabr. Bib. L. Med. t. v. p. 676. Pref. Ed. Volpi, 1720.

⁶ Trithem. de S. E. c. 622. Squarzacch Vit. Pet. Op. præm. Ep. Petr.

Government; Avarice;" and above all the rest, *De sua ipsius et aliorum Ignorantia*, "On his own Ignorance of himself and others," are exceedingly valuable. In reading the moral writings of Petrarch, we visit, not a barren desert of dry disputation, but a fruitful garden of elegant observations, full of the choicest flowers of literature.

Several other Italian writers followed the footsteps of Petrarch, and may be deservedly mentioned among the revivers of learning and philosophy; particularly his pupil and friend *John Boccace*,⁷ born at Certaldi, in Tuscany, in the year 1318, who, besides his celebrated *Decameron*, wrote a book *De Genealogia Deorum*, "On the Genealogy of the Gods," in which he treats of the fabulous philosophy of the Greeks with greater success than was to be expected in the age in which he lived.

About this period an event occurred, which greatly promoted the revival of letters in Italy, and other western parts of Europe. The oppression which all liberal arts and sciences suffered in the East under the conquest of the Turks, obliged many eminent Greeks to forsake their native country, and take refuge in Italy. *Emanuel Chrysoloras*,^a a Constantinopolitan of Roman extraction, having been sent, in the year 1387, by John Palæologus, the son of the younger Andronicus, to solicit the support and protection of the Christian princes in Europe against the Turks, visited first Venice, and afterwards Florence, Rome, and other Italian cities. He remained in the West till his death, which happened in 1414. Other Greeks, driven from their native country by the hostilities of the Turks, followed the example of Chrysoloras, and found an hospitable asylum in Italy. These brought with them many Greek books, and some portion of ancient learning. The consequence was, that Grecian literature, which had lain dormant in the West for seven hundred years, was revived, and ancient books, which had been for ages neglected, were brought to light, and with great avidity read and translated. Dante and Petrarch, and other learned men, having intro-

⁷ Erythræus Pinacoth. iii. p. 219. Blount. Cen. p. 437. Bayle. Trithem. c. 647. Fab. Bib. L. Med. t. i. p. 682.

^a Jovius Elog. c. 23. Bullart Acad. Sc. t. i. p. 265. Oudin. de S. E. t. iii. p. 123. Fab. Bib. Gr. v. x. p. 392.

effused, a taste for literature, the princes of Italy entered into a landable competition with each other, in affording countenance and protection to learning. Learned men from every quarter found a welcome reception at Rome, under the patronage of Pope Nicholas V. who was particularly disposed to encourage translations of Aristotle's works. The Medicean family at Florence expended their wealth, with great liberality, in providing a comfortable asylum for the learned refugees of the East. One of this family, Lorenzo di Medici, sent John Lascaris into Greece to purchase at any expense the most valuable Greek manuscripts.⁹ The effect of this judicious exertion of public spirit upon the state of learning was soon experienced: learned men, both Greeks and Italians, industriously devoted themselves to the necessary labour of multiplying copies, and furnishing versions of the ancient Greek writings; and the knowledge of the Greek language was everywhere disseminated.¹⁰

John Argyropulus, a Constantinopolitan, who was taken under the patronage of Cosmo di Medici, at the request of his patron, undertook to translate Aristotle's physics and ethics. The natural jealousy and reserve of his temper prevented him from freely communicating his learning to the Italians; and he affected to despise Cicero, whom he maintained to have been ignorant of philosophy and Greek learning. His translations, however, are valuable; and besides these he wrote a commentary upon the Ethics of Aristotle, and Solutions of Questions proposed to him by certain philosophers and physicians in the island of Cyprus. He taught the Aristotelian philosophy in Rome, with a stipend granted him by the pope; and died in the year 1486.¹¹

Among the learned Latins of the fifteenth century, were *Politian*,¹² of Tuscany, born in 1454, who translated from the Greek, Alexander Aphrodisseus's "Solution of certain Physical Questions," Epictetus's *Enchiridion*, and Plato's

⁹ Nic. Reusner in Icon. Lit. F. 6.

¹⁰ Ficini. Præf. in Plat. Bessario Dedic. Vers. Metaph. Arist. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. ii. p. 172.

¹¹ Bullart Ac. Sc. t. i. p. 269. Jov. Elog. c. 37. Bayle. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. x. p. 278.

¹² Bayle.

Charnis; *Hermolaus Barbarus*,¹³ who translated the medical writings of Dioscorides, the Rhetoric and other pieces of Aristotle, and is said to have supplicated the assistance of a divinity in explaining the signification of Aristotle's *ἱεράγεια*; *Franciscus Philolophus*,¹⁴ who wrote a treatise *De Morali Disciplina*, "On Moral Discipline;" and two books, *De Conviviis*, "Of Banquets," which discover an extensive knowledge of history and philosophy; *Peter Venger*,¹⁵ whose work *De Ingenuis Moribus*, "On Liberal Manners," affords a pleasing specimen of the sobriety with which philosophy now began to be pursued; *Manettus*,¹⁶ a Florentine, who translated Aristotle's Categories, with Porphyry's Introduction, and wrote the Lives of Socrates and Seneca, and treatises on wisdom, truth, possibility, the nature of the universe, the nature of the mind, &c. which discover an unusual share of philosophical knowledge; *Donatus Acciaius*,¹⁷ a pupil of Argyropulus, who wrote a commentary on Aristotle's ethics and politics; *Apollinaris Offred*,¹⁸ whose commentary on Aristotle, *De Anima*, and *Analytica posteriore*, obtained him great authority in the schools; and *Laurentius Valla*,¹⁹ born at Rome, in 1415, who freely censured the dialectics of Aristotle, and the philosophy of his own time, but discovered more skill in pulling down ancient edifices, than in erecting new ones; and of whom Erasmus says,²⁰ that with great industry and perseverance he refuted the absurdities of barbarians, raised learning from the grave, restored Italy to its ancient splendour of eloquence, and rendered this service to learned men, that he obliged them for that time to speak and write with greater accuracy.

The exertions which these learned men made towards the revival of learning and philosophy, are chiefly to be imputed to the example and influence of Chrysoloras, Argyropulus, and other Greeks, who, as we have seen, became resident about this time in Italy. And it is to be ascribed to the same cause, that the first innovations upon the Scholastic philosophy were made by two different

¹³ Trithem. c. 878.¹⁴ Jov. Elog. c. 17. Trithem. c. 855.¹⁵ Trithem. c. 856. Bayle.¹⁶ Voss. de Hist. Lat. l. iii. c. 7.¹⁷ Voss. de Hist. Lat. l. iii. c. 8.¹⁸ Morhoff. Polyh. t. ii. l. i. c. 11.¹⁹ Trithem. c. 750.²⁰ Ep. l. vii. 7. Viv. l. c. l. iii. p. 130.

classes of adversaries, those who were attached to the pure Peripatetic system, and those who embraced the doctrine of Plato. The Greeks had, in their own country, followed, some the Platonic or Alexandrian, others the Aristotelian, philosophy, and the Latins, through their example and influence, naturally fell into the same classes. Those of the Greek refugees who followed the Stagyræite, finding the Latins in general addicted to a spurious kind of Aristotelianism, endeavoured to persuade them to use their own eyes, and rather to follow Aristotle himself, than to yield an implicit deference to the judgment of the Arabian and Scholastic philosophers. Those, on the contrary, who were admirers of Platonism, strenuously recommended this system as most favourable to religion, and easily drew over to their interest such as were offended with the impiety of the reigning doctrine of Averroism. In this manner it came to pass, that, besides the body of Scholastics, who still continued, after their usual manner, to dispute and to trifle, two philosophical families sprung up in Italy, one of whom followed the system of Plato as now modelled in the Alexandrian schools, and the other professed to adhere to the genuine doctrine of Aristotle.

The first Greek who gave occasion to the revival of Platonism in Italy was George Gemist, also called *Pletho*,²¹ a native of Constantinople, who was born in 1390, and lived one hundred years. He was a zealous advocate for Platonism, and maintained a violent controversy with the Aristotelians. His heretical and philosophical writings afford unquestionable proofs of his learning, and particularly of his intimate knowledge of the Alexandrian philosophy. In his *Expositio Oraculorum Magicorum Zoroastri*, "Explanation of the Magic Oracles of Zoroaster," he exhibits twelve fundamental articles of the Platonic religion, and gives an elegant compendium of the whole Platonic philosophy. Other philosophical writings of Pletho are *De Virtutibus*, "On the Virtues;" *De Differentia Platonice et Aristotelice Philosophiæ*, "On the Difference between the Platonic and Aristotelian Philosophy;" *Demonstrationes naturales de Deo*, "Natural Arguments concerning God."

²¹ Aflatus de claris Georg. p. 741. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. x. p. 740.

A more moderate adherent to Plato, who maintained his system without despising the philosophy of Aristotle, or trespassing upon the doctrine of Christianity, was *Bessarion*,²² a learned bishop of Nice, whom the emperor Manuel Palæologus, about the year 1440, appointed, with other Greek divines, to treat with the Latin church concerning an union. Upon his return, he was nominated by the emperor to the patriarchate of Constantinople; but the zeal which he had shewn to reunite the Greek and Latin churches, was so displeasing to the Greeks, that he was obliged, for his safety, to return into Italy, where he was admitted to the Conclave by Pope Eugenius IV. Many subsequent honours were conferred upon him. He died at Ravenna, in 1472. His house was the general resort of men of letters, whether Grecians or Latins; and he allowed them the free use of his large and valuable library, which he left, by will, to the Senate of Venice. A friend to moderation, he made use of all his influence and authority to bring the violent disputes of the times to an amicable termination. He wrote a defence of the Platonic system against George Trebizond, and translated, but with great obscurity, Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, the *Metaphysic* of Aristotle, and that falsely ascribed to Theophrastus.

Under the patronage of Cosmo di Medici, *Marsilius Ficinus*,²³ a Florentine, born in 1433, was educated by Pletho for the express purpose of translating the writings, and reviving the philosophy, of Plato. He was provided with every kind of instruction necessary to qualify him for this undertaking, and applied himself with great industry and success to his studies. At the same time he enjoyed the benefit of conversation with many able and learned men, who frequented the house of his patron, for the most part followers of Plato. Notwithstanding this advantage, it appears from the manner in which he executed his task, and from his other writings, that he was deficient in strength of judgment and correctness of taste. His Latin style wants that richness and dignity which are requisite in a version of Plato. Many proofs may be found in his writ-

²² Bullart Acad. Sc. t. i. p. 9. Fabr. l. c. p. 401. Trithem. c. 459. Dupin Nouv. Bib. Ec. t. xii. p. 122.

²³ Præf. in Platonis Vcrs. Shelhorn. Amoenitat. Liter. t. i. p. 18.

ings of a degree of weak superstition, wholly inconsistent with the character of a philosopher. He was of a timid and servile spirit which would naturally lead him to accommodate his version to the judgment of his patron. And he entertained the notion which prevailed among the Christian Fathers, that the doctrine of Plato was, in some sort, of Divine origin, and might be fairly construed into a perfect agreement with that of Divine revelation. From these causes, Ficinus is very far from adhering with strictness to his author's meaning; in many instances he rather expresses his own conceptions than those of Plato, and often gives his interpretation a bias towards the Alexandrian or Christian doctrine, for which he had no sufficient authority in the original. On the whole, Ficinus was rather an industrious than a judicious translator, and his version of Plato should be read with caution. He died in the year 1499.

A fellow-labourer with Ficinus, in the task of editing and translating the writings of Plato and his followers, was *Joannes Picus*, of Mirandola,²⁴ born in 1463, who, for his success in reviving the Platonic philosophy, was honoured with the title of the phoenix of his age. Before he was twenty-four years of age, he had acquired such a knowledge of science and of languages, that he went to Rome, and proposed for disputation nine hundred questions in dialectics, mathematics, philosophy, and theology, which he also hung up in all the open schools in Europe, challenging their professors to public disputation, and promising to defray the travelling expenses of any one who would undertake a journey to Rome for this purpose. The issue of the challenge did not correspond with the expectations of this ambitious youth; he became an object of universal jealousy and envy, and was suspected of magic, and charged with heresy. A few years afterwards, probably through disappointment and mortification, he gave himself up to solitude and devotion, and formed a resolution to distribute all his property among the poor, and to travel, barefooted, through the world, in order to propagate the gospel. But death put an end to this extravagant project, in the thirty-

²⁴ Jo. Moller. Homonym. p. 883. Vit. a J. Fr. Pico in Bates Vet. Select. Politian. Misc. Cent. i. c. 100.

second year of his age. He was a zealous supporter of Platonism, after the model of the Alexandrian school; but not without blending with its doctrine a large portion of Cabbalistic mystery, and confounding with both these the doctrine of Divine revelation.

Another body of Greek scholars were at this time advocates for the genuine Aristotelian philosophy, and employed their time and learning in editing and translating the writings of the Stagyrte. Before the revival of letters, though the name of Aristotle was idolized, his writings were, as we have seen, read only in imperfect Latin translations. But after many learned Greeks had settled in Italy, and introduced a taste for Greek literature, his works were studied in the original; and, whilst Plato's writings were translated and commented upon by many learned men, under the patronage of the Medicean family, others, under the direction and authority of Pope Nicholas V. rendered the same service to literature with respect to the works of Aristotle. This task, though of uncommon difficulty, on account of the obscurity of the author, and the defective state of the manuscripts, was executed with tolerable success. Of those who laboured in this undertaking, the principal were Theodore Gaza, George of Trebizond, and Georgius Scholarius.

Theodore Gaza,²⁵ a native of Thessalonica, came over into Italy under the protection of the Cardinal Bessarion, and Cosmo di Medici, and applied himself so diligently and successfully to the study of the Latin tongue, under Victorinus, that, according to Jovius, it was not easy to say, whether he translated more correctly from Latin into Greek, or from Greek into Latin. He particularly admired and imitated the style of Pliny the Elder. Through the bounty of his patron, he lived for several years in plenty; but, for want of economy, he involved himself in debt, and was reduced to poverty. To extricate himself from these difficulties, he set about a translation of Aristotle, "On the History of Animals," and, when he had finished the work, dedicated it to Pope Sixtus IV. in hopes of receiving from his holiness a liberal recompence. The pope, however, only made him a small present; upon which Gaza, through vexation and resentment, immediately went and

²⁵ Jov. Elog. c. 26. Trithem. c. 848. Volater. Anthr. l. xxi. p. 775.

threw the money into the Tiber. From that time he withdrew from Rome, and passed his days in Calabria, till disappointment preyed upon his constitution, and put an end to his life. He died in the year 1478.

Georgius Trapezuntius, or *George of Trebizond*,²⁶ born in the year 1396, came into Italy at the time of the celebrated council of Florence, held for the purpose of uniting the Greek and Latin churches. He taught rhetoric and philosophy, first at Venice, and afterwards at Rome. Pope Nicholas V. honoured him with his particular friendship. He defended the Peripatetic philosophy against the Platonists with great vehemence and acrimony; nor did even his fellow-labourers in the task of translating Aristotle escape the effects of his haughtiness and ill temper. A violent quarrel arose between him and Gaza, in their joint undertaking of translating Aristotle "On Animals;" each claiming to himself the exclusive merit of having overcome the difficulties which arose from the great number of names of animals which are found in that work. He wrote "A Comparison of Aristotle and Plato," full of bitter invective. He translated Plato's dialogue *de Legibus*, and Aristotle's treatise *de Animalibus*, but he must not be allowed the credit either of accuracy or fidelity. He frequently violated the duty of a translator by unpardonable variations, omissions, or additions. Trapezuntius died in 1484.

Georgius Scholarius,²⁷ a learned Greek, studied letters, philosophy, theology, and jurisprudence in his native city, Constantinople. In the council of Florence, he opposed the union of the eastern and western churches, and hereby displeased the emperor. Upon his return home, he retired into a monastery near Constantinople, and took the name of Gennadius. At the taking of Constantinople, he fled into Italy, and spent his last days in the monastery of John Baptist, at Monaco, where he died, about the year 1464. He wrote an introduction to Porphyry on Universals, and a Commentary on the Categories of Aristotle, and on the book *de Interpretatione*.

²⁶ Jov. c. 25. Allat. de Georg. § 50. Niceron. Mem. t. xiv. p. 322. Wharton App. Cave, p. 97.

²⁷ Allat. l. c. p. 760. T. Smith. Misc. p. 4. Renaudot. Diss. de Vit. et Op. Gennadii. Fab. Bib. Gr. v. x. p. 343.

Between these two bodies of philosophers, those on the one part who followed Plato, and those who on the other followed Aristotle, a dispute arose concerning the merit and authority of their respective masters, which was carried to a most ridiculous and extravagant height. It was begun by Pletho, whose veneration for Plato led him to oppose with great violence the unrivalled dominion which Aristotle had for ages possessed in the schools. Georgius Scholarius took up the pen so zealously in defence of Aristotle, that he maintained, after Marcus Eugenius, bishop of Ephesus, that the opinions of Aristotle are consonant to the truest and best doctrines of the Christian religion, and are *even more true*; and that the tenets of Plato differ from those of Aristotle, and are *therefore* false. George of Trebizond supported Scholarius with extreme virulence of temper, and rudeness of language. On the other side, Pletho was ably and strenuously seconded by Gaza. Other combatants of inferior note engaged in the contest; but the dispute produced no better effect, than that of exposing the contending parties to ridicule; and, therefore, only deserves to be mentioned, as an example of the power of prejudice to pervert the judgment and inflame the passions of men.²²*

CHAP. II.

OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE REFORMATION OF RELIGION UPON THE STATE OF PHILOSOPHY.

IF, at this period, philosophy was much indebted to the revival of letters, it was not less benefited by the Reforma-

* Diss. Roivin. Mem. de l'Acad. des. Inscrip. t. ii. p. 776. Heuman. Act. Phil. v. ii. p. 537.

* Vidend. Paul. Jov. Elog. Wharton ad Cave. Oudin. de Scrip. Eccl. Fabric. Bibl. Gr. Fabric. Bib. Lat. Med. Reusner in Iconibus L. Clar. Vir. Gundling. Hist. Erud. Wadding. Ann. Ord. Men. Soleri Acta S. t. v. Dupin Nouv. Bibl. des Auct. Eccl. t. xi. Borrich. de Orig. et Prog. Chemiæ. Nich. Anton. Bibl. Hisp. Blount. Cens. cel. Auct. Bzovii Annal. Als. Horn. Hist. Phil. l. vi. Niger de Script. Florent. Poccianus de Script. Flor. Nicéron. Memoires. Papadopoli Hist. Gymn. Patav. Trithemii Cat. S. E. Annal. Hirsaug. Teissier Eloges. Ghilini Theat. Vir. Erud. Morhoff. Polyhistor. Huët. de clavis Interpret. Adami Vit. Phil. Miræus in Auct. Bayle.

tion of Religion. For, no sooner did the friends of truth and virtue apply themselves to the correction of religious errors, and endeavour to free mankind from the yoke of ecclesiastical domination, to which the whole western world had for many ages tamely submitted, than Philosophy, which had been loaded with the same chains with Religion, began to lift up her head, and to breathe a freer air. Determined no longer to yield implicit obedience to human authority, but to exercise their own understandings, and follow their own judgments, these bold reformers prosecuted religious and philosophical inquiries with an independent spirit, which soon led them to discover the futility and absurdity of the Scholastic method of philosophizing, and enabled them at the same time, in a great measure, to correct the errors of philosophy, and to reform the corruptions of religion.

The study of ancient languages being now revived, and the arts of eloquence and criticism having now resumed their ancient station, the reformers were soon convinced, that ignorance and barbarism had been among the principal causes of the corruption of doctrine and discipline in the church. Hence, whilst these honest and zealous friends of truth ardently longed for the reformation of religion, they were earnestly desirous to see philosophy restored to its former purity; and their bold attempts to subdue religious error and prejudice indirectly contributed to the correction of philosophy, and the advancement of learning.¹

So extensively powerful was the operation of this reforming spirit, that it diffused its influence beyond the reformers themselves, to those who still chose to remain within the verge of the Romish church. Many of these secretly approved of the design in which the reformers were engaged; but, either because they were dissatisfied with the manner in which it was conducted, or because they were afraid to encounter the hazards which attended the undertaking, contented themselves with admiring the courage of the reformers, and lending them concealed and indirect assistance. Perceiving that the Scholastic method of philosophizing had been the chief cause of the evils which had arisen in the church, these men, several of whom were eminently

¹ Seckendorf. Hist. Lutheran. l. i. § 69. Ep. ad Reuchlin. p. 13.

distinguished for genius and learning, judiciously endeavoured to correct religion, by first correcting philosophy. Some inveighed seriously against the prevailing corruptions of science and learning, and painted, in strong colours, the distorted features of the Scholastic philosophy, and the mischiefs which it had produced in the learned world. Others, calling in the aid of wit and satire, held up its deformities to public ridicule. These attacks upon the established institutions and practices of the schools, raised a violent ferment among those who were interested in their support, and brought upon the heads of their opponents a load of calumny, reproach, and persecution. But this violence served no other purpose than to expose the weakness of the cause of the assailants, and to bring Scholastic philosophy into general contempt. The interests of learning and religion were so much indebted to these Castigators of the Scholastics, that it would be injustice to their memory not to give the principal of them a place in this work.*

The learning and ability of that great man, *Erasmus*,² of Rotterdam, and the services which he rendered to learning and religion, are well known. But his serious labours having been chiefly of the philological kind, he appears as a philosopher in no other light than as a keen observer, and humorous censor, of false philosophy, in his incomparable treatise entitled "The Praise of Folly," and in other parts of his writings. His penetrating genius, extensive reading, and elegant taste, gave him great weight among his contemporaries, and added much efficacy to his useful labours. The severe sarcasms which he cast upon the Scholastics, created him enemies, and subjected him to hardships; but he never ceased to chastise folly, and to approve himself a true friend to solid learning and sound philosophy. Erasmus was born in the year 1467, and died in 1536. His numerous works were published in ten volumes folio, at Leyden, 1706.

The footsteps of Erasmus were closely followed by *Lu-*

² Conf. Adam. Vit. Phil. p. 336. Thuan. ad Ann. 1547. Teissier Eloges, t. i. p. 7. Blount. Cens. p. 595. Erasmi Encom. Moriae. Epistolae Obscurorum Virorum.

³ Adami Vit. p. 98. Le Clerc. Bibl. t. vii. p. 215. Bayle. Jortin's Life of Erasmus.

dovicus Vives,⁴ a native of Valentia, in Spain, who, though well trained in all the subtleties of the Scholastic philosophy at Paris, had the good sense to discover its futility, and diligently applied himself to more useful studies. At Louvain, he undertook the office of a preceptor, and exerted himself with great ability and success in correcting barbarism, chastising the corrupters of learning, and reviving a taste for true science and elegant letters. Erasmus, with whom he lived upon the footing of intimate friendship, speaking of Vives when he was only twenty-six years of age, says,⁵ that there was no part of philosophy in which he did not excel; and that he had made such proficiency in learning, and in the arts of speaking and writing, that he scarcely knew his equal. He wrote a commentary upon Augustine's treatise *De Civitate Dei*, which discovers an extensive acquaintance with ancient philosophy. Henry VIII. of England, to whom he dedicated this work, was so pleased with it, that he invited the author to his court, and made him preceptor to his daughter Mary. Though he discharged his office with great fidelity, yet, in consequence of his opposition to the king's divorce, he fell under his displeasure; and it was not without difficulty that he escaped to Bruges, where he devoted the remainder of his days to study. He died in the year 1537, or, according to Thuanus, in 1541. With Erasmus and Buddæus, he formed a triumvirate of literature, which did honour to the age. He wrote *De Prima Philosophia*, "On the First Philosophy;" *De Explanatione Essentiarum*, "On the Explanation of Essences;" *De Censura Veri*, "On the Test of Truth;" *De Initiis, Sectis, et Laudibus Philosophiæ*, "On the Origin, Sects, and Praises of Philosophy;" and *De Corruptis Artibus et Tradendis Disciplinis*,⁶ "On the Corruption of Science, and on Education." These writings, of which the two last are the most valuable, discover great strength of judgment, an extensive knowledge of philosophy, much enlargement of conception, uncommon sagacity in detecting the errors of ancient and modern philosophers,

⁴Blount. l. c. p. 519. Teisser Elog. t. i. 266. Nic. Anton. Bib. Hisp. N. t. i. p. 109. Colomes. Hisp. Orient. p. 223.

⁵Ep. xix. 101.

⁶Ed. Lugd. 1551, 8vo.

particularly of Aristotle and his followers, and, in this, a mind capable of attempting things beyond the standard of the age in which he lived. To all this he added great perspicuity and elegance of style, not unworthy the friend of Erasmus. Morhoff⁷ calls the writings of Vives, Golden Remains, which are worthy to be carefully perused by all learned men.

A third scourge of Scholastic barbarism was *James Faber*, or *Le Fevre*,⁸ a native of Picardy. He was educated at Paris, but not contented with the learning he acquired there, he travelled through various parts of the world, to converse with the learned. On his return to France, he declared open war against the Scholastic philosophy, and attempted to introduce the genuine Aristotelian philosophy, and to disseminate a taste for mathematical learning. Besides theological works, he wrote commentaries upon the dialectics, physics, politics, and economics of Aristotle. One of his contemporaries, speaking of these commentaries, says,⁹ "Faber has rendered the Peripatetic doctrine so clear, that we have no longer any occasion for Ammonius, Simplicius, or Philoponus." Another says,¹⁰ "Faber was the first among the French, as Cicero among the Romans, who united philosophy and eloquence." The boldness with which he opposed the corruption of philosophy brought upon him a suspicion of heresy, and the persecution of the doctors of the Sorbonne: but he found a secure asylum in the court of Margaret, Queen of Navarre, where he is said to have lived to the age of a hundred years.

About the same time arose *Marius Nizolius*,¹¹ of Brussels, a severe castigator of barbarism. He was an enthusiastic admirer of the purity and eloquence of the style of Tully; and to promote a taste for correct and elegant literature, he wrote his *Thesaurus Ciceronianus*, "Ciceronian Treasury." By a natural association, he extended his attachment to Cicero from his language to his philosophy; and maintained a strenuous contest in favour of

⁷ Polihist. t. i. l. ii. c. 2. § 34.

⁸ Jovius, c. 121. Bayle. Art. Le Fevre. Blount, p. 521.

⁹ Rhenan Ep. ad Renschlin, p. 52.

¹⁰ Wimpfeling, c. 15. p. 236.

¹¹ Morhoff. t. i. l. i. c. 25. § 26.

Cicero with several learned men. In the course of the dispute he wrote a treatise *De veris Principiis et vera Ratione Philosophandi*,¹² "On the true Principles and Method of Philosophizing," in which he vehemently censured the followers of the Stagyrice, and particularly the Scholastics, chiefly for the corruptions they had introduced into the Latin language.

But the most direct and successful attack upon the Scholastic philosophy was made by the Reformers. Perceiving that the human understanding was clouded, and the freedom of inquiry restrained, by the forms of the schools, and that nothing contributed so much to perpetuate superstition and error in the church as false philosophy, these great and able men concluded, that the disease admitted of no palliative; that, in order to produce any great and lasting effect, it was not sufficient barely to lop off the heads of the tares which had sprung up in the church, but that it was become necessary to tear them up by the roots. They, therefore, with a degree of magnanimity which entitles them to immortal honour, made a bold and open attack at once upon the corruption of philosophy and theology; laying open the numerous evils which the Scholastic mode of philosophizing had introduced into religion; shewing by what puerile arts, and with how much injury to truth, both natural and Divine, it had maintained its authority; and exhorting young men to leave such faithless guides, and give themselves up wholly to the direction of Reason and Revelation.

The leader in this arduous and meritorious undertaking was the great reformer *Martin Luther*,¹³ born at Eislaben, in Saxony, in the year 1483. He was early initiated in the Peripatetic philosophy, but soon opened his eyes to discover its defects. During his residence at Wittemberg, in the year 1516, he wrote to Jodocus, a zealous Aristotelian, who had been his preceptor in the university at Erford, stating his doubts both respecting the doctrines of Aristotle and of Porphyry. Jodocus was so much of-

¹² Ed. 1553. Leibn. 1670. Ep. Leibn. t. ii. p. 63.

¹³ Melancthon. Vit. Luth. ap. Op. L. recus. cum Ann. Henmann. Gotting. 1741. 4to. Seckendorf. Hist. Lutheran. p. 103. 121. Fabric. Centfol. Luth. p. i. p. 367.

fended with the freedom of his remarks; that, upon his next visit to Erford, he refused to see him. Luther, far from being intimidated by this mark of displeasure, afterwards wrote him a second letter, in which he boldly gave it as his opinion, that it would be impossible to reform the church, without entirely abolishing the canons and decretals, and with them the Scholastic theology, philosophy, and logic, and instituting others in their stead.¹⁴

In the early part of his life, Luther had studied the writings of Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and others, and in the dispute concerning universals, attached himself to the party of the Nominalists; but maturer age and reflection instructed him to treat the whole controversy, and indeed all the subtleties of the Scholastics, with contempt. This was probably in part owing to his early acquaintance with the ancients, but chiefly to that peculiar strength and ardour of mind, which led him easily to discover the weakness and absurdity of the prevailing modes of reasoning and judging upon theological and philosophical subjects, and to observe, with regret and indignation, the fatal effects of corrupt philosophy united with ecclesiastical tyranny. He saw much reason to consider the Scholastic philosophy as the foundation of the principal errors which had been introduced into theology, and the chief support of that oppressive dominion which the see of Rome exercised over the consciences of men; and he regarded the logical and metaphysical parts of Aristotle as the immediate grounds of those disputes, which had given rise to the factions of the Thomists, Scotists, Occamists, and others. He therefore rejected both the Scholastic and Aristotelian philosophy, as not only irreconcilable with the Christian system, but the cause of endless controversies in the Christian church. In various parts of his writings he expresses great contempt for Aristotle and his followers. He asserts, that the study of Aristotle was wholly useless, not only in theology and sacred learning, but in natural philosophy.¹⁵ "What doth it contribute," says he, "towards the knowledge of things, to be perpet-

¹⁴ Lutheri Epist. i. 10.

¹⁵ Declarationes ad Heidelbergenses apud Werensdorf. Diss. de Progressu emendatæ per Luth. Relig. p. 20.

ually, trifling, and cavilling, in language conceived, and prescribed by Aristotle, concerning matter, form, motion, and time?" And again,¹⁶ "I am persuaded that neither Thomas, nor all the Thomists together, ever understood a single chapter of Aristotle." On some occasions, perhaps, the heat of controversy might lead Luther to make use of language too contemptuous and indignant, in speaking of Aristotle and his writings. His indignation, however, was chiefly directed against that false philosophy which had been built upon his doctrine, ill understood; and his great object was to free the world from the yoke of authority in philosophy and religion. It is sufficiently manifest from the life and writings of Luther, that he was no enemy to sound philosophy.

Melancthon, though he differed in judgment, on many topics, from Luther, and though he so far espoused the doctrine of Aristotle as to attempt the revival of the pure Peripatetic philosophy in the schools (on which account we shall afterwards give him a place among the Peripatetics of this period) nevertheless perfectly agreed with the Father of the Reformation in his judgment concerning the nature and effects of the Scholastic philosophy. In his writings, we find him frequently complaining of the mischiefs which these subtle speculations had occasioned:¹⁷ "Ever since this method of philosophizing has been introduced, ancient learning has been despised, mathematics deserted, and sacred studies more negligently cultivated. Among the variety of opinions which prevail in the different Scholastic factions, you will scarcely find one that is consistent with itself. Truth is every where confounded with error, and every doctor is more concerned to gather crowds by his noisy disputations, than to discover and establish sound philosophy. In the mean time dissensions every where arise; enmities are cherished; rancour supplies the place of that candid spirit which ought ever to accompany learning; and the ancient union between the Muses and Graces is dissolved." Many other followers of Luther, and friends of the Reformation, op-

¹⁶ T. i. Ep. 45.

¹⁷ De Stud. corrigend. t. i. p. 489. Conf. Orat. adv. Rhodm. t. iii. p. 38.

posed the Scholastic mode of philosophizing, and exerted themselves to introduce a spirit of liberal inquiry.

The cultivation of polite learning, which had revived in Italy, and was now spread still further, promoted the same good design. Though few of those who engaged in critical studies addicted themselves to any particular sect of philosophy, they served the cause of science, as well as of literature, by editing and interpreting the philosophical writings of the ancients. In the sixteenth century, *James Sadolet*,¹⁸ a great admirer of Ciceronian eloquence, wrote an elegant treatise *De Laudibus Philosophiæ*, "On the Praises of Philosophy;" *Hieronymus Fracastorius*¹⁹ studied nature, and was well acquainted with mathematics and astronomy; *Camerarius*²⁰ edited, with valuable notes, many ancient Greek authors, and, among the rest, Archytas *De Decem Prædicamentis*, "On the Ten Predicaments;" *Nicomachus De Theologia Arithmetica*, "On Arithmetical Theology," and Aristotle's *Ethics*; *Grynæus*,²¹ whose translations from Plato, Aristotle, and Plutarch, ranked him among the learned men of his age, and of whom Erasmus speaks,²² as a man who, with an accurate knowledge of the Grecian and Latin tongues, and an extensive acquaintance with philosophical and mathematical science, united an uncommon share of modesty. Through the aid of such men as these, with which the age abounded, philosophy, as well as literature, revived.

In this manner, and from these causes, it happened, that the reformation of religion was accompanied with the correction and enlargement of philosophy; so that from this time to the present, the study of science in all its branches has been cultivated with great industry and success, and it may be truly asserted, that since the commencement of the sixteenth century, more has been done towards the advancement of knowledge, than was done in all the preceding ages of the world.*

¹⁸ Blount, p. 573. Teisler, t. i. 23.

¹⁹ Thuan. ap. Adam. Vit. Med. p. 77.

²⁰ Fabric. Bib. Gr. v. xiii. p. 493.

²¹ L. xxvi. ep. 39.

²² Vidend. Diss. de Relig. Erasmi, Hamb. 1717. Warton ad Cæle. Chassanæi Catal. Glor. Mundi. l. x. p. 204. Beyschlagius Syll. ii. opusc.

CHAP. III.

OF THE REVIVAL OF THE ANCIENT SECTARIAN
PHILOSOPHY.

SECT. I.

Of the Remains of the Scholastic Philosophy.

WITH what assiduity the Scholastic philosophy was opposed, with what clearness its futility and pernicious tendency were laid open, from the time of the revival of letters to the completion of the Reformation in the sixteenth century, we have already seen. And how successful these attempts were, with men of sound understandings and honest minds, who preferred truth to every other consideration, the whole history of the revival and improvement of philosophy will shew. But, since nothing in human affairs is brought to perfection at once, it is not surprising that some predilection for Scholastic subtleties still remained. In the midst of the general spirit of reformation and improvement which distinguished this period, there were not wanting men, who, from their zealous attachment to ancient systems, and the ecclesiastical hierarchy, judged it inexpedient to dismiss an ally, to which they had been so much indebted. In order therefore to retain this palladium of the church of Rome, the advocates for established forms pleaded, that the evils so violently complained of had originated, not from the Scholastic method of philosophizing, but from the abuse of it; and that nothing more was necessary to render this philosophy a useful auxiliary to religion, than to chastise its subtleties, and moderate the spirit of vain curiosity and idle disputation which had prevailed in the schools. Under this futile pretence, the

p. 263. Rexinger. et Edzard. Diss. de Lutheri Ref. Hamb. 1717. Wucherer. de Increm. Phys. a Reform. Temp. Jen. 1717. Leshman. de Utilitate Morali Discip. Ref. ib. Stockii de bon. Lit. renov. post Ref. ib. Elswich de Fort. Arist. in Ac. Prot. Halbauer. Diss. de Luth. posit. Lit. Wernsdorff de Prog. emend. Rel. Crenius de Sing. Script. Struvii Bibl. Phil.

friends of the Romish hierarchy retained in their hands an instrument, which had been found so useful in establishing and perpetuating the reign of ignorance and superstition. Hence, whilst a better method of philosophizing was every where else adopted, the Scholastic philosophy, somewhat corrected by the introduction of Aristotle's logic and metaphysics, was still studied and professed in the colleges and monasteries belonging to the church of Rome. Even into these schools indeed some rays of light penetrated. A few men of superior genius, and a more liberal spirit, even this unfavourable soil produced, who saw the weakness of the pleas upon which the Scholastic philosophy was retained, and who ventured, though with little success, to recommend salutary innovations.

Toletus,¹ of Cordova, a Jesuit, who flourished about the middle of the sixteenth century, and is celebrated for his learning and the perspicuity of his writings, philosophized after the genuine manner of the Peripatetic school. *Ricciolus*,² an Italian Jesuit, who in the seventeenth century, taught at Bologna and at Parma, studied with great success the sciences of mathematics and astronomy. *Caranuel de Lobkowitz*,³ a native of Madrid, born in 1606, obtained a great name for the extent and variety of his learning, and for a surprising fertility of genius. He pretended to introduce wonderful improvements into every branch of science; but the luxuriance of his imagination obstructed the growth of the substantial fruits of sound judgment, and his voluminous writings, notwithstanding all their originality, were soon forgotten. *Honoratus Faber*,⁴ born in 1626, and professor of mathematics and philosophy at Lyons, wrote upon philosophy, logic, and physics. He implicitly followed neither the Scholastics nor the Aristotelians, but borrowed light from modern philosophers, particularly the Cartesians. His innovations, however, brought him under a strong suspicion of heresy, and produced little effect.

The generality of the Romish clergy still retained so much of the Scholastic spirit, that instead of promoting, they only retarded the progress of true philosophy. It

¹ Pinacotheca i. p. 196.

² N. Anton. Bib. Hisp. n. t. i.

³ Bibl. Soc. Jen. p. 416.

⁴ Bibl. Soc. Jen. p. 350.

would therefore be a tedious and fruitless task to detail their history. Their writings chiefly consist of systems of philosophy, summaries of logic, theses upon Scholastic topics, and commentaries upon the works of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas.

The bigoted attachment to ancient systems, which has prevailed in the Romish church with respect to religion, has always extended itself to philosophy, and has given a permanent establishment to the Scholastic method of philosophizing, which all the wisdom of modern times has not been able to overturn. It is, however, a happy omen of the entire exorcism of the demons which have so long haunted the schools, that in many universities a better and more extensive plan of instruction has been adopted, which has in a great measure precluded the idle dreams of dialectic subtlety. In an age in which a rational plan of philosophizing was generally followed; in which vague conceptions, unmeaning terms, and uncertain principles were commonly exploded; in which the accurate method of mathematical reasoning was applied with success to other sciences; in which experimental philosophy was every where studied and encouraged; and in which the correct use of language was an object of attention, it could not but happen that the empty shadow of abstraction would be thrown out of the philosophical world, to make room for more substantial and profitable studies.⁵

SECT. II.

Of the Revival of the genuine Aristotelian Philosophy.

"ALTHOUGH, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Scholastic philosophy began to fall into general contempt, Aristotle still retained, in a great degree, his authority. It required more enlargement of thought than the age afforded

⁵ *Midend. Melchior. Camus. L. Theol. I. viii. ix. Pref. ad Mabillon. de Stud. Monast. Le Ccrf. Bibl. des Auteurs de la Cong. de S. Maur. N. Anton. Bibl. Hisp. N. Jac. Echard. de Sc. Domin. Wadding Annal. Ord. Min. Carol. de Vish. Bibl. Scrip. Ord. Cisterc. F. Rothfischer. Ep. ad Cardin. Lettres Provinciales de Montalte. Vavasseur Op. p. 240.*

ed to discard at once a system of philosophy, which had been received with almost universal approbation, and been supported by the united labours of the learned for so many centuries; nor was it merely the power of prescription which established the dominion of Aristotle, several other causes concurred to produce this effect.

The partizans of the Platonic system, who, under the patronage of the Medicean family, for a long time maintained their ground against the Aristotelians, declining with the fortunes of their patrons, the advocates for the Peripatetic philosophy proportionally increased, and, after a violent struggle, established a victory. It greatly contributed towards this issue, that men began at this time to extend their inquiries beyond the region of metaphysics and theology, into the subjects of natural history and philosophy. Finding little assistance in their researches into nature in the writings of Plato, they had recourse to the Stagyrice, who was at this time universally allowed to be the best guide in the study of physics. And, though in his treatises upon this branch of science they met with much obscurity, and many difficulties, the persuasion that they were a rich mine of knowledge, which would amply repay the labour bestowed upon it, induced them to spare no pains to come at his true meaning.

Among the followers of the church of Rome the Peripatetic philosophy continued to be zealously maintained, on account of the assistance which its dialectics afforded them in the defence of the established system, and because many of the doctrines of this system coincided with those of the school of Aristotle.

The deference which had been long paid to the decisions of Aristotle, even whilst his works were only read in very imperfect translations, induced the first restorers of learning to make his writings a principal object of their attention, and to rest much of their reputation, as editors, translators, and commentators, upon the manner in which they executed this part of their office. And the brevity and obscurity of Aristotle's style, his frequent reference to preceding writers, and the injuries which his works had sustained from time, and from the ignorance, negligence, or dishonesty of transcribers, furnished those who were

desirous of distinguishing themselves as philologists with an ample field for the display of learning and ingenuity. The first race of critics upon Aristotle, after the revival of letters, and the invention of printing, employed themselves in verbal rather than philosophical criticism, and took more pains to fix the true reading, and explain the grammatical construction of their author, than to investigate or illustrate his philosophical tenets. But it was soon found that a knowledge of philosophy, as well as an attention to the rules of criticism, was necessary in writing notes upon Aristotle; and the second race of commentators, from Pomponatius to the middle of the seventeenth century, were chiefly employed in ascertaining and restoring the true Aristotelian philosophy.

Even among the reformers, though Luther was a professed enemy to Aristotle, his philosophy had many admirers. Melancthon, as we shall afterwards see, approved of and encouraged the study of his dialectics and metaphysics, as a useful exercise of the understanding, and only objected to the misapplication of them in theological questions. It is to be regretted, that a man of such superior abilities, and in every other respect of so independent a spirit, should addict himself to any sect, and choose rather to be an interpreter of Aristotle, than to follow the course of his own ideas, and philosophize for himself. The consequence was, that Aristotle, who, in the zeal of reformation, had been driven out of the church, was again suffered to steal in; and that, after the thorns which Scholastic philosophy and subtlety had planted were extirpated, the ground was again encumbered with barren weeds. This was the only reason why, among Protestants, to whom the authority of Aristotle could be of little use, and who ought to have exercised the same freedom of thinking in philosophy as in religion, the doctrine of Aristotle prevailed even till the time of Bacon, Grotius, and Des Cartes.

It would be an endless undertaking to enumerate all the learned men, who, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, attached themselves to the Aristotelian system. We shall select a few of the more celebrated names.

Among the Roman Catholics, *Nicholas Lebonius Tho-*

mus,⁶ a Venetian, born in the year 1467, seems to have been among the first who attempted to restore the genuine Aristotelian philosophy. His preceptor in Grecian learning, and other branches of literature, was Demetrius Chalcondylas, of Florence. He derived his knowledge both of the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy from their purest fountains; and preferring the latter, opened a Peripatetic school in Padua, and wrote commentaries upon Aristotle's physics. Erasmus⁷ speaks of him as an excellent philosopher, a profound scholar, and a good man. He died in the year 1521.

At this period flourished Pomponatius,⁸ of Mantua, who was born in the year 1462, and died in 1525. He taught the doctrines of Aristotle and Averroës in the schools of Padua and Bologna. Though much addicted to superstition and fanaticism, and a zealous advocate for judicial astrology, as appears from his book *De Incantationibus*, "On Enchantments," he had an understanding capable of penetrating into the depths of the Peripatetic system, in the study of which he chiefly followed the commentaries of Aphrodisæus. His writings, though barbarous and inelegant in style, discover great acuteness and subtlety of thought. He publicly taught the natural mortality of the soul, and maintained that the whole proof of a future existence depends upon revelation. His doctrine upon this subject became so popular, that Pope Leo X. thought it necessary to issue a bull to suppress it. His book *De Immortalitate Animæ*, "On the Immortality of the Soul," was publicly burnt at Venice, and it was only through the interest of Cardinal Benbo, that the author escaped the flames. He also wrote a treatise "On Fate and Free-will." Notwithstanding all his pretended reverence for the doctrines of the church, there can be little doubt, that Pomponatius had more respect for the authority of Aristotle, than for that of Jesus Christ.⁹

Pomponatius had many followers of great celebrity ;

⁶ Jovius, l. c. c. 91. Fabr. Bib. L. M. t. iv. p. 788. Patricii Disq. Perip. l. iii. p. 149. Bayle.

⁷ In Ciceroniano.

⁸ Jovius, l. c. c. 71. Nicéron. Memoires, t. xxv. Bayle. J. Olearius de Pomponatio. Jenæ, 1700.

⁹ Reimann. Hist. Ath. s. iii. c. 4. § 8.

among whom were, *Simon Porta*,¹⁰ a Neapolitan, who wrote a treatise upon the Peripatetic system, *De rerum Naturalium Principiis*, "On the Principles of Nature;" and another *De Anima et Mente Humana*, "On the Human Soul and Mind," in which he followed the doctrine of his master; *Julius Cæsar Scaliger*,¹¹ a celebrated philologist; and *Lazarus Bonamicus*,¹² who rivalled Erasmus in elegant Latinity. *Vanini*, the Atheist, who wrote two treatises, *De Natura Regina Deaque Mortalium*, "On Nature, the Queen and Goddess of Mortals," and *Amphitheatrum*, "The Amphitheatre," is said by some to have been his pupil, but this is impossible, for Pomponatius died in the year 1525, and Vanini was not born till the year 1586.

Pomponatius found an able opponent in *Augustine Niphus*,¹³ a native of Calabria, who, like many other learned men of this age, practised medicine at the same time that he taught philosophy. He wrote his treatise *De Immortalitate Animæ*, "On the Immortality of the Soul," by order of Pope Leo X. in which he undertook to prove that this doctrine is not contrary to the principles of the Aristotelian philosophy. Niphus, like many other learned men of this period, affected in his writings a gross kind of wit, which was not very consistent either with the dignity of philosophy or with purity of morals: an unquestionable proof of great corruption of principle, as well as depravity of taste.

Majoragius, of Milan; *Sepulveda*, of Cordova; *Peter Victor*, of Florence; *Zabarella*, of Padua; *Strozza*, of Florence; with many others, whose names are preserved in the literary histories of these times, are chiefly known as commentators upon Aristotle.¹⁴ *Cesalpinus*,¹⁵ an Italian, born in the year 1500, was an eminent physician, who made a considerable progress in the discovery of the circulation of the blood, afterwards completed by Harvey. He wrote *Questiones Peripateticæ*,¹⁶ "Peripatetic Ques-

¹⁰ Thuan. l. xiii. p. 276. Teisser Elog. t. i. p. 197.

¹¹ Epist. 90.

¹² Teisser. p. 126.

¹³ Niceron. Mem. t. xviii. Bayle.

¹⁴ Conf. Teisser. N. Anton. Imp. Mus. Hist. Huet. de clar. Interp. Bayle. Eurithr. Pinacoth.

¹⁵ Vit. Select. Uratist. 1711. Ep. Richter. p. 23.

¹⁶ Ed. Franckf. 1597.

tions." He adopted opinions similar to those which were afterwards held by Spinoza. *Cæsar Cremoninus*,¹⁷ of Modena, born in the year 1550, was a zealous follower of Aristotle, and privately maintained opinions contrary to the Christian faith.

Among the Protestants, especially in Germany, philosophy was at this period diligently studied; and in their public schools we find many learned men, who, as far as their superior reverence for Jesus Christ would permit, were followers of Aristotle. At the commencement of the Reformation, indeed, both the Scholastic philosophy and the dogmas of Aristotle were rejected with great indignation, particularly, as we have seen, by Martin Luther. But afterwards, when men of the soundest judgment and best erudition perceived the value of philosophy as a guard against fanaticism, much pains was taken to promote learning and encourage a love of science.¹⁸

The first place in this class of reformers is unquestionably due to *Philip Melancthon*,¹⁹ who was born at Bretten, in Upper Saxony, in the year 1497. At twelve years of age he was sent to Heidelberg, where he soon distinguished himself by his excellent abilities, sweetness of temper, and urbanity of manners, and obtained the confidence and friendship of many learned men. Before he was fourteen years old, he studied the Greek language with such attention, that he wrote rudiments of that language, which were afterwards published. From Heidelberg he was removed to Tübingen, where he attended upon professors in various branches of science, and acquired a large store of erudition. Having early formed a taste for perspicuity and correctness in writing, and being convinced that every literary and scientific pursuit is valuable only in proportion as it admits of some useful application, he was much dissatisfied with the subtle and uninteresting speculations which still occupied the schools, and frequently amused himself with exposing them to ridicule.

¹⁷ Imp. Mus. p. 173. Crass. Elog. t. ii. p. 124. Bayle.

¹⁸ Elswich de Fort. Arist. in Acad. Protest. Laun. de Fort. Arist. Flacius Clav. Script. p. i.

¹⁹ Vit. Mel. a Camerario, Winshemio, Adamo. Seckendorf, Hist. Luth.

He spent the greater part of his time in the study of the ancients and the Holy Scriptures. At seventeen years of age, in the year 1518, he received the degree of Master of Philosophy, and immediately undertook the office of preceptor. His first instructions were confined to the Latin tongue, which he was even at that time well qualified to teach. He was then requested to give lectures upon oratory, which he did, by commenting upon Cicero and Livy, as the best models. In the Scholastic controversy between the Realists and Nominalists, in which he ranked among the latter, he distinguished himself by his mildness and moderation, no less than by the strength and clearness with which he maintained his opinions.

From Tübingen Melancthon was removed, by the favour of Frederic, Elector of Saxony, in the year 1518, to a new college established by that prince at Wittenburg, in which he was appointed professor of the Greek language. Through the zeal of Martin Luther, the Reformation had at this time made a considerable progress; but the clouds of barbarism were not yet dispersed from the philosophical and literary world. This was a matter of infinite regret to Luther, whose active mind was impatient to dissipate the darkness which surrounded it. He therefore gladly embraced the opportunity, which the residence of Melancthon in Wittenburg gave him, of entering into friendship with a man so well inclined to second his views, and so able to assist him in accomplishing his designs. Literature, philosophy, and theology, soon experienced the happy effects of this alliance. The profound learning, sound judgment, and cultivated taste of Melancthon enabled him to correct many errors and abuses which had crept into the public schools. The honest zeal and the independent spirit of Martin Luther supported him in the prosecution of his great undertaking, the reformation of the church. Both adopted the same leading views; both were inspired with the same love of truth, the same integrity, and the same desire of rescuing mankind from the dominion of ignorance and bigotry. Yet their natural tempers were different, the one having perhaps too much gentleness of disposition, whilst the other possessed a degree of ardour which required some restraint. The best effects were there-

fore to be expected from the strict friendship, which, at this time, took place between Luther and Melancthon; and the subsequent history of this period corresponds to this expectation.

Philosophy, however, was chiefly indebted to Melancthon. The deep interest which he took in the reformation of religion, did not prevent his attention to the improvement of literature and science. In order to excite a spirit of emulation in the public schools, and suggest hints of improvement, he frequently delivered public discourses on the best method of prosecuting the study of philosophy, which abounded with good sense and sound learning. With the same design he wrote, for the use of students, compendiums of Dialectics, Ethics, and Physics, and a treatise "On the Soul," the design of which was,²⁰ to free the schools from the nugatory subtleties and idle labours of the Scholastics, and to confine the attention of young men to useful studies. He industriously ransacked the writings of the ancients, to collect from them, in every branch of learning, whatever was most deserving of attention. Mathematical studies he held in high estimation, as appears from his Declamation²¹ *De Mathematicis Disciplinis*, "On Mathematical Learning," which will very well repay the trouble of perusal. In philosophy he followed Aristotle, as, in his judgment, the most scientific and methodical guide, but always in due subordination to revelation, and only so far as was likely to answer some valuable purpose. "I would have no one," says he, "trifle in philosophizing, lest he should at length even lose sight of common sense; rather let him be careful, both in the study of physics and morals, to select the best things from the best sources."²²

If the particular cast of Melancthon's mind be considered, it will not be thought surprising, that in philosophy he preferred a moderate attachment to a particular sect, to any bold attempt at perfect innovation. Though he possessed a sound understanding and amiable temper, he wanted that strength and hardiness of spirit, which might have enabled him to have done in philosophy, what Luther

²⁰ Ep. l. i. p. 350.

²¹ Op. t. iii. p. 239.

²² De Stud. Corrig. t. i. Decl. p. 503.

did in religion. He therefore chose rather to correct the established mode of philosophizing, than to introduce a method entirely new. If it be a just occasion of regret, that, in consequence of the natural gentleness, and perhaps timidity, of his temper, he proceeded no further, it ought not to be forgotten, that while religion was much indebted to his cool and temperate, but honest exertions, philosophy was not without obligation to him, for the pains which he took to correct its eccentricities, and to adorn it with the graces of eloquence.

After a life in which temperance had enabled him to maintain a long struggle with infirmity, and in which integrity, moderation, candour, and meekness, had given him a just title to the character of a Christian philosopher, Melancthon died, in the year 1560, leaving behind him a name immortalized by learning and piety.

Melancthon made use of the extensive influence which his high reputation, and the favour of the reigning Elector of Saxony, gave him in the German schools, in which he was considered as a kind of common preceptor, to unite the study of the Aristotelian philosophy with that of ancient learning in general. And he was much assisted in the execution of this design, by the labours of many learned protestants of the Germanic schools from Italy and Great Britain, who brought with them an attachment to the Peripatetic system, and, wherever they were appointed public preceptors, made that system the basis of their philosophical instructions. From Wittemburg, Tubingen, Leipsic, and other seminaries, conducted after the manner which was introduced by Melancthon, many learned men arose, who, becoming themselves preceptors, adopted the same plan of instruction, which from Melancthon was called the Philippic Method; and thus disseminated the Peripatetic doctrine, till at length it was almost every where taught in the German Protestants' schools, under the sanction of civil and ecclesiastical authority.²³

At Leipsic, *Simon Simon*, of Lucca, left his native country to join the reformers at Geneva. Here, after having, through the injudicious zeal of Beza and other Gene-

²³ Melanc. Declam. t. i. p. 334. 353. 506. t. ii. p. 360. 370. t. iii. p. 371. Mayer. de nimia Lenitate Phil. Melanc.

van divines, fallen under ecclesiastical censure, and suffered imprisonment for holding anti-trinitarian tenets, he was admitted to the professorship of philosophy.²⁴ He for some time enjoyed the patronage and confidence of Augustus, elector of Saxony; but his colleagues, through bigotry or envy, soon found means to bring against him new accusations of heresy, and obliged him to resign his station. He withdrew to Poland, where he practised physie, and lived several years, under the protection of the reigning prince. Besides several medical works, he wrote a treatise *De Sensuum Instrumentis*, "On the Instruments of the Senses;" and another *De vera Nobilitate*, "On True Nobility;" and Commentaries upon Aristotle *De Memoria*, and upon his books *To Nicomachus*.

In the academy at Tübingen flourished *Jacobus Schegk*,²⁵ and in that of Altdorf, *Philip Scherbius*.²⁶ Both acquired great reputation as preceptors of the pure doctrine of Aristotle, and both defended the Peripatetic philosophy against the followers of Ramus.

Contemporary with Scherbius, and of the same school, was *Nicholas Taurellus*,²⁷ who, though he for the most part followed Aristotle in logic, physics, and metaphysics, corrected his doctrines with great freedom, and ventured to reject them wherever he judged them to be contrary to reason and revelation. His professed maxim was, in matters of philosophy, to submit implicitly to the authority of no master. His freedom subjected him to much obloquy.

Ernestus Sonerus,²⁸ a native of Nuremberg, and a pupil of Scherbius, taught medicine and the Aristotelian philosophy at Altdorf. He travelled with two young men of noble rank through Italy, France, Holland, and Great Britain, and formed an extensive acquaintance with men of learning. After his return home, he became a popular preceptor in physics and medicine, in which he chiefly followed Aristotle and Galen. He was a zealous and able advocate

²⁴ Bayle.

²⁵ Adami Vit. Medic. German. p. 200.

²⁶ Baier. Vit. Medic. Altdorf. p. 15.

²⁷ Adami Vit. Med. p. 403. Bayle. Baier. l. c. p. 16. Feuerlin. Apol. pro Taurello.

²⁸ Richter Vit. Son. Nuremb. 1614. Zeltner Hist. Crypto-Socin. Altdorf. § 17. Baier. p. 26.

for the doctrines of Socinus, which had at this time many defenders in Poland and Lithuania. Besides his Socinian tracts, a treatise against the eternity of future punishment, and other theological works (which are exceedingly scarce) he wrote, in philosophy, a paraphrase on Aristotle *De Interpretatione*, and *Disputationes Philosophicæ*, "Philosophical Disputations." He was born in 1572, and died in 1612.

Besides these, there were many other celebrated Germanic philosophers of this period, whom, for the sake of brevity, we omit. We must not, however, pass over without notice the eminent scholar *Hermannus Conringius*,²⁹ one of the most illustrious ornaments of the Germanic schools. He was born at Embden, in the year 1606, and was educated at Leyden, where he made himself acquainted with the whole circle of sciences, but chiefly applied to the study of theology and medicine. His eminent attainments soon procured him distinction in the schools, and he was appointed professor, first of natural philosophy, and afterwards of medicine, in the university of Brunswick. Turning his attention to the study of history and policy, he became so famous in these branches of knowledge, as to attract the attention of princes. Christina, Queen of Sweden, who was a general patroness of learned men, invited Conringius to her court, and upon his arrival received him with the highest marks of respect. The offer of a liberal appointment could not, however, induce him to relinquish the academic life, and after a short time he returned to Juliers. But his uncommon talents for deciding intricate questions on policy were not long suffered to lie dormant. The Elector Palatine, the Elector of Mentz, the Duke of Brunswick, the Emperor of Germany, and Louis the Fourteenth of France, all consulted this great man, and conferred upon him honours and rewards. And, if universal learning, sound judgment, and indefatigable application can entitle a man to respect, Conringius merited all the distinction he obtained. The great extent of his abilities and learning appears from the number and variety of his literary productions. His polemic writings prove him to have been deeply read in theology. His medical knowledge appears

²⁹ Corberi Vit. Couring. Præf. Synt. Ep. Conring.

From his "Introduction to the Medical Art," and his "Comparison of the Medical Practice of the ancient Egyptians and the modern Paracelsians." The numerous treatises which he has left on the Germanic Institution, and other subjects of policy and law, evince the depth and accuracy of his juridical learning. His book, *De Hermetica Medicina*, "On Hermetic Medicine," and his *Antiquitates Academicæ*, "Academic Antiquities," discover a correct acquaintance with the history of philosophy. It is to be regretted, that this great man was never able wholly to disengage himself from the prepossession in favour of the Aristotelian philosophy which he imbibed in his youth. Although he had the good sense to correct the more barren parts of his philosophy, and was not ignorant that his system was in some particulars defective, he still looked up to the Stagyræ as the best guide in the pursuit of truth. It was owing to his partiality for ancient philosophy, particularly for that of Aristotle, that Conringius was a violent opponent of the Cartesian system. The term of his life, which was industriously occupied in study, was seventy-six years. His works are published entire in six volumes folio.*

To the list of the learned men of this period, who favoured the Peripatetic doctrine, we shall add *Christianus Drierus*,[†] a native of Stetin, in Pomerania, the author of a treatise entitled *Philosophia Prima*, "The First Philosophy," and of several dissertations, which cast much light upon the history and genius of the Peripatetic philosophy: *Melchior Zeidler*,[‡] of the same place, the author of "An Introduction to Aristotle," and "A Dissertation on the various Methods of Reasoning made use of by the Ancients;" and *Jacobus Thomasius*,[§] of Leipsic, who wrote several metaphysical treatises, but is chiefly memorable as the preceptor of the illustrious Leibnitz.

The preceding particulars respecting the more eminent adherents to the Peripatetic system, from the revival of letters to the eighteenth century, compared with the view, given in a former part of this work, of the Aristotelian philosophy, may enable the reader to form a judgment con-

* Ed. Brunswig. 1730.

† Reiman. Hist. Lit. Germ. p. iv. p. 33.

‡ Vit. ap. Op. Helmst. 1689.

§ Hagen. Mem. Phik. Remov. p. 273.

cerning the manner in which this philosophy was taught and professed, after it had been in some measure freed from the quibbles and subtleties of the Scholastics. A few general remarks on modern Peripatetic philosophy shall therefore close this section.

Whatever praise may be due to those learned men who endeavoured to restore the dogmas of the Stagyrite to their purity, it is to be lamented, that they retained so much reverence for his authority, as to think it necessary to follow him as their guide. That this was the prevailing opinion of the learned in Italy, France, Germany, and England, from the restoration of learning to the end of the seventeenth century, appears from the whole history of philosophy during this period. Though they had seen the deformed aspect which philosophy had for several ages borne, they imputed this rather to the infelicity of the times, than to any defect in the nature of the Sectarian philosophy; and concluded, that if they could restore this philosophy to its original purity, they should accomplish every thing that could be wished. Wholly unaccustomed to steer their course without a pilot, they distrusted their ability to direct themselves, and thought it safer, as well as more modest, to commit themselves to the direction of so celebrated a guide as Aristotle. Entering upon the study of science with so strong a prejudice in favour of their preceptor, few thought of examining his doctrines, fewer doubted of their truth, and still fewer ventured to forsake them. Learned men were, almost universally, more solicitous to know what Aristotle taught, than to discover what reason dictates. Hence, instead of becoming philosophers, they became mere interpreters of Aristotle; their labour was employed, not in investigating truth, but in endeavouring to remove the difficulties and obscurities which hung upon the doctrines and writings of their instructor.

The causes which, even after the revival of learning, perpetuated this blind respect for the name and authority of Aristotle, will be easily discovered by any one who attentively observes the circumstances of the times. The prejudice in favour of antiquity had now taken deep root; and it was universally believed, that the ancient Grecians had attained the summit of science, and that nothing could

be added to the stores of wisdom which they had transmitted to posterity. Among the Greek philosophers Aristotle was almost universally allowed the first place, for depth of erudition, solidity of judgment, and accuracy of reasoning. His empire had now been so long established, that even those who gave the preference to Plato were afraid wholly to reject the Stagyræite, and were willing that these two princes of philosophy should possess united authority. Nor could it possibly be otherwise, so long as the name of Aristotle was held forth to young persons as an object of reverence, by parents, preceptors, and heads of colleges, and his writings continued to be zealously recommended by the general body of the learned. The authority of Aristotle was further confirmed, by the intimate alliance which had, long before this time, been formed between the dogmas of the Peripatetic philosophy and the religious creed of the church. From the metaphysical parts of this philosophy several tenets had been blended with the Christian system, and the whole course of sacred instruction had been formed upon the model of Aristotle's dialectics; whence this philosophy was now so interwoven with the ecclesiastical establishment, that to attempt a separation would be to hazard the whole fabric on which its benefits, powers, honours, and emoluments depended. To these may be added a third cause, immediately arising from the revival of letters. This happy event was, as we have seen, chiefly owing to the arrival of learned Greeks in Italy, at the time of the dissolution of the eastern empire. By means of their instruction and example, a general taste for ancient learning was introduced, and the Greek writers of every class were read and admired. Among the rest, the philosophers, who were held up by the Grecians as oracles of wisdom, were eagerly studied; particularly Plato, on account of the supposed Divine origin of his theological doctrine; and Aristotle, on account of his strict method of reasoning, and the scientific accuracy of his writings.

The general prepossession in favour of the Aristotelian system; which, from these and other causes prevailed for several centuries after the revival of letters, was attended with much inconvenience and mischief. The reformers of philosophy, observing that the Scholastics, in order to har-

making the Aristotelian system with the doctrines of Christianity, had represented the Stagyrice under fictitious colours, determined to embrace his real tenets as they are found in his writings; whence they imbibed opinions from the Peripatetic philosophy, wholly inconsistent with the principles of true religion; such as, for example, that God, the first mover, wholly intent upon the contemplation of his own intellect, disregards the affairs of the world; that the Intelligence, which presides over the lower sphere, is the Universal Soul of the world, of which all men partake; and, consequently, that the soul of man has no distinct existence, and will no longer subsist as such, than whilst the body continues to live. These, and other similar tenets, were commonly embraced by the modern Peripatetics, especially in Italy, who thought that they paid sufficient respect to religion, if they pretended, as Christians, to embrace a different creed, though they were not able to reconcile it with the dogmas which they were taught by reason and philosophy. In this manner, Pomponatius, Cæsalpinus, Cremoninus, and others, cast the thin veil of religious profession over real infidelity. This mischief proceeded to such an extreme, that the minds of the multitude, both ecclesiastics and laity, were at this time deeply tinctured with atheism; and this fatal relaxation of principle produced an uncommon depravity of manners. A regard to the providence and authority of God, and the fear of future punishment, having almost wholly lost their influence upon the minds of those who still called themselves, not only philosophers, but Christians, sobriety and decency were abandoned in their conversation, and the grossest impiety and obscenity disgraced their writings.

This swelling torrent of profaneness the fathers of the Lateran council in vain endeavoured to stem by a bull which, in the year 1510, was issued against the Aristotelian corruptions. The Peripatetics ridiculed this idle fulmination; for they were not ignorant, that the pontiff himself, Leo X. and the cardinal, Peter Bembo, by whom the bull was issued, lay under a strong suspicion of being themselves infidels. Subsequent ecclesiastical decrees lopped off some of the branches of this spreading impiety, but no one saw the necessity, or had the courage to root up the

tree. The public guardians of religion were, or seemed to be, ignorant that the errors of the Aristotelian philosophy lay at the foundation of this corruption. Themselves infected with the disease which they undertook to cure, if the Christian faith was professed in words, they thought it of little consequence what tenets were in reality believed. In order to throw dust into the eyes of the people, the ecclesiastics professed to yield such implicit submission to the authority of the church, as to embrace its decrees, though they were wholly irreconcilable with the invincible reasonings of the Peripatetic schools. Under this mask they did not scruple publicly to defend any kind of impiety, only adding this caution, that they proposed positions of this kind merely in the way of speculation, and though they might be true according to Aristotle, they were false according to the decisions of the church, to which they humbly submitted, though they were not able to discover the reasons upon which they were founded. Such pitiful evasions, though they might suffice to secure the credit of the church among an ignorant populace, proved highly injurious to good morals, by encouraging fraud and hypocrisy. The motto of Cremoninus seems to have expressed the general sense of the Peripatetic clergy of this period, *Intus ut libet, foris ut moris est*: "Abroad, with the people; at home, as you please."

The Stagyrte having, for many centuries, possessed authority in the schools little inferior to that of Jesus Christ in the church, and his dogmas being intimately interwoven with those of religion, it was thought exceedingly hazardous to whisper any thing to the discredit of his philosophy. The learned Berigard, who was sensible of many errors in this system, declares,³³ "that in lecturing upon Aristotle he did not think himself at liberty to give his own opinion, lest he should be thought to treat his master with contempt,"³⁴ and to trample upon the ashes of the ancients." This reverence for Aristotle was still supported, in popish universities, by statutes, which required the professors to promise upon oath, that in their public lectures on philosophy they would follow no other guide. It is easy to perceive, that, if free-

³³ Præf. Circul. Pisan.

³⁴ Ne in magistrum despuere, et apolactizare, ut ait Plautus, velle videar.

dom of speech, even at the very fountain head of instruction, was thus restricted, there could be little scope for freedom of inquiry, and little probability of the advancement of knowledge.

Among Protestants, the errors and corruptions of the Peripatetic philosophy met with opposition; but it was attended with little success. Luther, whose independent spirit rose superior to all human authority in matters of opinion, and who was fully sensible of the mischiefs which an injudicious respect for philosophy had introduced into religion, was for the entire rejection of Aristotle. But the general prejudice in favour of the Stagyrte retained such firm possession of the mind of Melancthon, that he judged it the wiser and safer way to adhere to his system, except in those particulars in which it directly militated against revelation, and thought, that the best service he could render to the learned world, was to give a perspicuous explanation of the Peripatetic philosophy. His *Philippics*, which, as we have seen, were founded upon Peripatetic principles, obtained an extensive and lasting authority in the schools. And when this ceased, the preceptors of philosophy returned to their ancient guide, and Scholastic barbarism was in some measure revived. The freedom of inquiry which at this period prevailed among Protestants, would not, it is true, suffer the defects and errors of ancient philosophy to remain unnoticed. Several eminent men even ventured to inveigh against Aristotle himself, as the author of many pernicious errors. But still, his system, for the most part, retained its authority, and even those who forsook this master, thought it necessary to make choice of some other ancient guide; so that, after all, the question was, what Aristotle, Plato, or Pythagoras had taught, rather than what was truth.*

* Vidend. Adami Vit. Theol. Reimann. Hist. Lit. Germ. p. iv. v. Apini Vit. Prof. Phil. Altdorf. Zeltner. Vit. Theol. Altdorf. Matthesii Vit. Luther. Budd. Isag. l. i. c. 4. Philosophia Altdorfina, Norimb. 1614. Crenii Animadv. Phil. p. 13. Mayer Diss. de nimia lenitate, 1707. Arnold Hist. Eccl. p. ii. l. xvi. c. 10. Vogtii Catal. Lib. rar. p. 639. 562, &c. Sandii Bibl. Antitrinit. Boecler. Bibl. Crit. c. 40. Morhoff. Polyhist. t. ii. l. i. Bayle.

SECT. III.

Of the Revival of the Platonic Philosophy, mixed with the Pythagorean and Cabbalistic.

THE doctrines of the later Platonists having been revived, as we have already related, by the Greek exiles in Italy, their further spread is chiefly to be imputed to the aversion which many good men entertained against the Peripatetic philosophy, on account of the shameful impieties to which it had given birth. Perceiving that they could not commit themselves to the direction of Aristotle, without hazarding their religious principles, and not having strength of mind sufficient to form a system of opinions for themselves; they adopted the philosophy of Plato, in the corrupted state in which it had been transmitted, through the Alexandrian and Christian schools, to modern times. This philosophy was the more readily embraced, because it was believed, that the mysteries of Pythagoras, than which none appeared to approach nearer to those of true religion, had been long since united with the wisdom of Plato. Men hoped to find in this school much Divine instruction; and they were confirmed in this expectation by the persuasion, that its doctrines had been, immediately or remotely, derived from Divine revelation. And, as one error naturally produces another, these learned men united with this system the secret or Cabbalistic philosophy of the Jews, which, for want of a thorough examination, they conceived to have been the pure doctrine of the ancient Hebrews. Hence a new compound of tenets arose, sufficiently mysterious and paradoxical, which was received by this class of philosophers as the sum of ancient wisdom.

After Plotho, who, as we have related, made use of the Jewish Cabbala as a key to unlock the Pythagorean mysteries, flourished John Reuchlin,³⁵ a native of Pforzheim, in Suabia, born in the year 1455. In his youth, when he was a student at Paris, and afterwards when he was a preceptor of languages, first at Basil, and afterwards at Or-

³⁵ Melancthon Vit. Reuch. Declam. t. iii. p. 280. Reuchl. Dedic. libr. de Accentibus. Maii Vit. Reuch. Fr. 1687. 8vo. Reuch. Epist. Ed. Tigur. 1568. 8vo. Trithem. c. 920.

leas, he was a follower of Aristotle. But upon a tour through Italy, which he made with Eberhard, count of Wittenburg, he became acquainted with Ficinus, Politian, Picus, and other Platonists, who resided at Florence, and embraced their opinions. At Rome, a friend who was offended with the harshness of the German name Reuchlin, prevailed upon him to exchange it, after the common practice of the age, into *Capnio*, a Greek name of the same signification; whence he was chiefly known among foreigners by that name. Capnio, at Vienna, during an embassy to the emperor Frederic III. upon which he was sent by Count Eberhard, and afterwards at Rome, while he was upon an embassy to the pope from the elector Palatine, prosecuted the study of the Hebrew language under the direction of certain learned Jews, chiefly that he might have access to the Jewish Cabbalistic writings, whence he hoped to cast new light upon the Pythagorean and Platonic doctrines. His knowledge of the Hebrew language unfortunately brought him into great trouble and hazard.

A certain Jewish convert, John Pfefferkorn, of Cologne, to shew his zeal for Christianity, advised the guardians of the Christian faith to burn all the Jewish books, except the Bible, as full of blasphemy against Christ; and, through the influence of the monks and theologians of Cologne, obtained from the emperor an edict for this purpose. Pfefferkorn himself was employed to collect them, and they were brought to Frankfort to be publicly committed to the flames. The Jews, who justly considered this proceeding as a grievous persecution, earnestly entreated the emperor to suspend the execution of the order, till the books had passed under the examination of the learned. The emperor consented; and Capnio, who was universally acknowledged to excel in this kind of learning, was appointed by the Elector of Mentz, under the authority of the emperor, to pass a judgment upon these writings. Capnio, though he had not the liberality, or more probably the courage, to oppose the whole project as a violation of an important natural right, and as a disgrace to Christianity, had nevertheless too much good sense to adopt, in its full extent, the wretched policy of the authors and promoters of this design. He therefore gave it as his opinion, that no other

books should be destroyed but those which were found to be written expressly against Jesus Christ, lest, with the Jewish books on liberal arts and sciences, their language itself, so important to the church, should perish. This opinion was approved by the emperor, and the books were by his authority restored to the Jews. Pfefferkorn and his supporters were exceedingly enraged against Capnio, and pursued him with invectives and accusations even to the court of Rome. His high reputation in the learned world, however, protected him; and bigotry met with a most mortifying defeat in his honourable acquittal.

The spleen of the ecclesiastics against Capnio was still further increased by a comedy abounding with keen satire, which this writer, whose genius was not inferior to his learning, produced; the chief design of which was to expose the ignorance of the monks. It was at first only circulated in manuscript, but afterwards found its way into the press.³⁶

In the latter part of his life, the adversaries of Capnio had too much reason to exult over him; for notwithstanding all his learning and celebrity, he was scarcely able, by teaching the Greek and Hebrew languages (which he did in several different schools) to preserve himself from absolute want. He spent his last days at Trebingen, where he died in the year 1522. His faculties, which were naturally vigorous, were cultivated with great industry. His mind was richly stored with various erudition, and his character was eminently distinguished by probity and urbanity.³⁷

Whilst Ficinus was reviving the Platonic philosophy in Italy, and Faber the Aristotelian in France, Capnio professed and taught a mystical system, compounded of Platonic, Pythagoric, and Cabbalistic doctrines. He wrote several profound treatises on philosophy, of which the principal are these: *De Verbo Mirifico*, "On the Wonderful Word," and *De Arte Cabbalistica*, "On the Cabbalistic Art." On the whole, Reuchlin, or Capnio, is certainly to be ranked in the class of Mystics, and deserves more praise for his assiduous and successful attempts towards the revival of learning, than for any service which he rendered

³⁶ Pforzheim, 1607.

³⁷ Op. Reuchlin. ed. Hæg. 1519. Tigur. 1558.

to science. His epistles are full of valuable information concerning the literary history of this period.

A similar track was pursued by *George Venet*,³⁸ an obscure and enthusiastic writer, who mixed sundry Peripatetic notions with the Platonic and Cabbalistic systems. He was of opinion that Pythagoras and Plato, Orpheus and Zoroaster, Job and Solomon, St. John and St. Paul, Origen and Dionysius, all derived their wisdom from one common source, the Divine Logos. His chief works are, *Harmonia Mundi*, "The Harmony of the World," and *Problemata in Scripturam Sacram*, "Problems upon the Sacred Scriptures."

The Mystic system of Cabbalistic Platonism was supported with great ability, and not without a vast display of erudition, by *Henry Cornelius Agrippa*,³⁹ a man of wonderful genius, whose life was distinguished by much vicissitude of fortune. Agrippa was born at Nettesheym, in Cologne, in the year 1486. Whilst young, he was employed for seven years in the service of the emperor Maximilian, first as his secretary, and afterwards in a military capacity: notwithstanding which, he found leisure to learn several languages, and to gain an extensive knowledge of science. He very early engaged in the study and practice of medicine, and formed a romantic expectation of recommending himself to the patronage of princes, by pretending to an intimate acquaintance with the secrets of nature, and particularly to the power of converting inferior metals into gold. Full of this wild project, he visited Spain, France, and several other countries, every where passing himself upon the world as a wonderful master of occult arts, that is, acting the part of an impostor. His pretensions obtained such a degree of credit, that at twenty-three years of age he obtained a professorship at Dole, in Burgundy, where he read lectures on the mystical work of Reuchlin, *De Verbo Mirifico*. But the novelty and boldness of his doctrine, at the same time that it brought him

³⁸ Wadding. Scr. Ord. Min. p. 119. Wharton App. Cave, p. 151. Olear. de S. E. p. 259. Sext. Senens Bib. 8. p. 287. Index Exp. Hisp. p. 406. 421.

³⁹ Adami Vit. Med. p. 16. Nicéron. t. xix. xx. Amoenit. Liter. t. ii. p. 538. Bayle.

many hearers, subjected him to severe persecutions from the monks; so that he found it necessary to leave Dôle, and pass over into England.

After a short stay in London, he returned, in compliance with the entreaties of his friends, to Cologne, and began to read lectures; but his restless spirit, which would not suffer him to remain long in the same place, soon carried him into Italy. Here he resumed for a while the military character in the emperor's army, and at the same time taught the mystical philosophy at Pavia, not without pretensions to Divine inspiration. From some cause, of which we are not informed, he lost his property, and lived for a while in great poverty, till, in 1518, his friends procured for him a civil office in the city of Mentz. But his unrestrained freedom of speech, and the severity with which he still continued his attacks upon monkish superstition, soon created him enemies in this city, and obliged him to return to Cologne; whence, after a short interval of time, he removed to Geneva, then to Friberg, where he practised physic, and afterwards to Lyons. In this city he was appointed physician to the mother of Francis the First, and obtained great influence with her by means of his pretended skill in astrology; but upon her departure from Lyons he was dismissed from his office, and it was with great difficulty that he obtained his stipulated salary.

Agrippa next removed to Antwerp, and put himself under the patronage of Margaret of Austria, who appointed him historiographer to the emperor Charles V. But his restless and cynical humour would not suffer him to enjoy the tranquillity which this situation might have afforded him. He continued to satirize men of every description, particularly ecclesiastics; and he wrote a treatise, "On the Vanity of the Sciences," and another, "On Occult Philosophy;" which brought upon him the displeasure of the clerical body, and alienated the affections of the emperor, so that he was dismissed from his office, was reduced to poverty, and, at Brussels, in the year 1531, was thrown into prison for debt. Regaining his liberty through the interposition of his friends, he visited the Archbishop of Cologne, to whom he had dedicated his treatise on the Occult Philosophy, and republished the work with nume-

rous corrections and additions. This, together with his "Apology for himself to the Senate of Cologne," which was full of spleen and invective, rekindled such a general spirit of hostility against him, that he found it necessary once more to withdraw into France. When he arrived at Lyons, he was imprisoned for some satirical papers, which he had formerly written against the king's mother, and it was not without much importunity, that his friends obtained his release from this confinement. He spent his last days with a friend in Grenoble, where he died in the year 1535.

From the whole history of Agrippa it appears, that he was a man of eccentric genius and restless spirit. In the midst of such numerous changes of situation and fortune, it is surprising that he was able to acquire such extensive erudition, and to leave behind him so many proofs of literary industry. There can be no doubt that he possessed a vigorous understanding, which rose superior to vulgar superstitions, and which prompted him to maintain a constant warfare with priestcraft. Though he did not choose to offend those princes to whom he looked up for patronage, by deserting the church of Rome, he saw with great satisfaction the bold attack made upon its corruptions by Martin Luther; and he himself, like Erasmus, Faber, and others, perpetually harassed the monks by satirical writings.⁴⁰ His cynical severity, and above all the disposition which he discovered to make his fortune by practising upon vulgar credulity, must not pass without censure. His Occult Philosophy is rather a sketch of the Alexandrian mixed with the Cabbalistic theology than a treatise on magic. It explains the harmony of nature, and the connexion of the elementary, celestial, and intellectual worlds, on the principles of the Emanative System. His treatise "On the Vanity of the Sciences," is not so much intended to traduce science itself, as to ridicule the follies of the learned, and expose the numerous absurdities of the established modes of education.⁴¹

Very different was the method of restoring the Platonic

⁴⁰ Fabr. Hist. Bib. suev, t. vi. p. 270. Ed. Lugdun. sine ann.

⁴¹ Naud. Apol. p. 285. Webster de Magia.

philosophy which was pursued by *Franciscus Patricius*,⁴² born at Clyssea, in Illyricum, in the year 1529. In the schools of Italy he professed to unite the doctrines of Aristotle and Plato, but in reality undermined the authority of the former. He wholly deserted the obscurity of the Jewish Cabbala, and in teaching philosophy closely followed the ancient Greek writers. He was appointed by Pope Clement VIII. a preceptor in philosophy at Rome; after which he more openly discovered his aversion to the Aristotelian system, and advised the pope to prohibit the teaching of this philosophy in the schools, and to introduce the doctrine of Plato, as more consonant to the Christian faith. His *Discussiones Peripateticæ*, "Peripatetic Disquisitions," a learned, perspicuous, and elegant work, fully explains the reason on which his disapprobation of the Peripatetic philosophy was founded. Patricius also wrote several historical tracts, which have been much admired.

In the seventeenth century, Platonism found many advocates in Great Britain, owing, in a great measure, to the desire which many learned and able divines at this time entertained of refuting the tenets of Hobbes, whose doctrine will be afterwards noticed. For, although they were aware that the writings of Plato afforded little information on subjects of natural philosophy, in which physical experiment now began to take the place of metaphysical speculations, they thought that in theology and morals he had written sublimely, and not without some rays of Divine illumination; and hence concluded, that they could not more effectually oppose the Hobbesian impieties, than by reviving an attention to the doctrine of Plato, both in his own works and in those of his followers. A numerous band of learned advocates for religion at this time ranged themselves under the banners of Plato, among whom the most celebrated are Gale, Cudworth, and More.⁴³

Theophilus Gale,⁴⁴ a nonconformist of the Presbyterian

⁴² Erythr. Pinacoth. i. p. 203. Bayle. Teisser. Elog. t. iv. p. 218. Laun. de Fort. Arist. c. 14. p. 281. Morhoff. t. ii. l. ii. p. i. c. 14. § 1.

⁴³ Burnet's Hist. of his Own Time, v. ii. p. 187. Parker on the Platonic Philosophy, Oxon. 1664.

⁴⁴ Act. Phil. v. iii. p. 793.

sect, born in 1628, a writer of great erudition, was induced to become a zealous advocate for Platonism through a violent antipathy to the Cartesian system, which he thought unfriendly to morals, and contradictory to the doctrine of revelation. He undertook to trace back philosophy to its origin, and maintained, that there was a wonderful agreement between the ancient Barbaric philosophy, and the Jewish and Christian theology. He brought every philosophical tenet to the test of the Scriptures, and thought that it would not be a difficult undertaking, to separate from the Pagan philosophy those doctrines which originated in Divine revelation, and had been transmitted by tradition from the Hebrews to the Gentiles. Having persuaded himself that these doctrines had passed in a direct line, and without material corruption, from the Hebrew fountain to Plato, he recommended his philosophical writings as, next to the Scriptures, the most valuable remains of ancient wisdom. The chief point which he labours to maintain in his treatise "On Philosophy,"⁴⁶ is, that Plato received his knowledge of theology from the Hebrews, and that the doctrine on this subject taught by him and his followers, for the most part, agrees with that of the Holy Scriptures. This opinion he implicitly adopts from the ancient fathers, whose authority, with respect to this matter, we have had frequent occasion to call in question. His account of other philosophers is given, without much appearance of accurate discrimination, chiefly from Laertius. He divides the Aristotelian philosophy into *pure* and *impure*, and supposes, gratuitously enough, that the former passed from Moses to the Stagyrte through the channel of Plato's instruction. His favourite notion frequently occurs in his other learned work, "The Court of the Gentiles."⁴⁶

The Platonic philosophy was, with greater accuracy and sounder judgment, applied to the refutation of impiety by *Ralph Cudworth*,⁴⁷ the learned author of a valuable work, entitled, "The True Intellectual System of the Universe." He was born in the year 1617, at Aller, in Somersetshire, and educated at Cambridge, in Emanuel

⁴⁶ Ed. Lond. 1676. 8vo.

⁴⁶ Lond. 1672.

⁴⁷ Mosheim. Præf. et Annot. ad Syst. Int.

College, where he took the degree of master of arts in 1639: he was afterwards chosen master of Clare Hall, and Regius Professor of Hebrew. In 1654, having taken the degree of doctor of divinity, he was chosen master of Christ's College. Cudworth, for thirty years, discharged with great ability and fidelity the office of Hebrew professor in Cambridge; and continued his residence in that university till his death, which happened in the year 1688. The design of his "Intellectual System" is to refute the principles of Atheism. In this important undertaking, he very successfully employed a vast fund of erudition. But his partiality for the Platonic philosophy, in judging of which, after the example of his contemporaries, he paid too much respect to the writings of the modern Alexandrian Platonists, led him into frequent mistakes. In physics he adopted the Atomic system, but abandoning Democritus and Epicurus as the first patrons of impiety, he added to the doctrine of Atoms that of a certain middle substance between matter and spirit, to which he gave the appellation of Plastic Nature, which he supposed to be the immediate instrument of the Divine operation. This hypothesis gave rise to a famous controversy between Bayle and Le Clerc. The "Intellectual System" was first published in 1678, and, in the year 1713, was translated into Latin by Mosheim, with many learned and judicious notes.

But no one defended the Platonic doctrine, combined with the Pythagorean and Cabbalistic, with greater learning and subtlety than Cudworth's friend and colleague, *Henry More*,⁴⁸ born in 1614, and educated in Christ's College, Cambridge. After having laid a good foundation of classical learning at Eton, he diligently applied, at the university, to the study of philosophy. He early made himself perfect master of the doctrines of Aristotle and the Scholastics; but he met with so little satisfaction in their respective systems, that he determined to search for better guides; and he persuaded himself that he should find them among the Platonists. Wholly occupied with the desire of attaining that purity of mind, and Divine illu-

⁴⁸ *Præf. Op. Phil. Lond. 1676. Conf. Knorri Cabb. denud. t. i. p. ii. p. 14.*

mination, which might raise him to a union with God, he devoted his life to the sublime speculation of mystical philosophy, and to the study of the Scriptures. He spent his days in the university of Cambridge, where, after having long enjoyed the highest academical honours, in the year 1687, he died, leaving behind him a name highly celebrated among theologians and philosophers. His principal writings are, "The Mystery of Iniquity;" "A Key to the Revelations;" *Enchiridion Ethicum*, "A Manual of Ethics;" *Enchiridion Metaphysicum*, "A Manual of Metaphysics;" "An Apology for Des Cartes," and "A Collection of Philosophical Treatises, chiefly on the Jewish Cabbala."

More was strongly under the bias of the opinion so common among his contemporaries, that the wisdom of the Hebrews had been transmitted to Pythagoras, and from him to Plato; and consequently, that the true principles of Divine philosophy were to be found in the writings of the Platonists. At the same time, he was persuaded that the ancient Cabbalistic philosophy sprang from the same fountain; and therefore endeavoured to lay open the mystery of this philosophy, by shewing its agreement with the doctrines of Pythagoras and Plato, and pointing out the corruptions which had been introduced by the modern Cabbalists. The Cartesian system, which sprang up at this time, was embraced by More, as on the whole consonant to his ideas of nature; and he took much pains to prove that it was not inconsistent with the Cabbalistic doctrine. His penetrating understanding, however, discovered defects in this new system, which he endeavoured to supply. In short, the writings of this great man, though not without a deep tincture of Mysticism, are eminently distinguished by profound erudition, an inventive genius, and a liberal spirit.

A clear judgment may, after what has been said, be without much difficulty formed, concerning this new race of Platonists. The peculiar respect which they paid to the doctrines of Plato and Pythagoras, as in some sort of Divine original, rested upon suppositions which have never been established. The story of Pythagoras's journey into the East is extremely uncertain; and it is highly improba-

ble that he should ever have conversed with Hebrew prophets. Of his school, which had failed at a very early period, little was known. The whole notion of the Divine original of Plato's theology is built upon such slight evidence, that it may, without hesitation, be pronounced visionary. The Cabbalistic tenets, upon which these philosophers laid so much stress, were not, as they supposed, the pure doctrines of the Hebrews, but mystical fictions derived from Egyptian and Oriental sources. The tenets of the Platonic and of the Cabbalistic system differed essentially from the sacred truths which are taught in the Hebrew Scriptures. It is not to be conceived, that the fanciful doctrine of Emanation, which lies at the foundation of both these systems, could have been derived by tradition from Divine revelation. Yet, so much were these learned men blinded by prejudice in favour of an hypothesis, that they could see nothing but a perfect harmony between Platonism and Christianity, and mistook the dreams of the Alexandrian philosophers, and Jewish Cabbalistics, for the pure doctrine of religion. To this we must add, that they suffered themselves, in some instances, to be deceived by impostors, and, with a degree of credulity not wholly to be excused, admitted spurious writings as genuine; such, for example, as the remains of Zoroaster, Hermes, and Orpheus. From these and other causes they were led into so many misconceptions and errors, that caution should be exercised in acceding to their judgment concerning either Platonic or Christian doctrines.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Vidend. Wierus de Præstig. Dæmon. l. ii. c. 5. Natalis Comes Mythol. l. iii. c. 17. Naud. Apol. Mag. Accus. p. 285. Reimann. Hist. Lit. Germ. p. iii. p. 168. Gimma Idea Della Storia Letterata d'Italia, t. ii. c. 39. Budd. Introd. in Hist. Ph. Heb. Morhoff. Polyh. t. ii. p. 186. Stoll. Introd. in Hist. Lit. p. ii. c. 1. Reimann. in Cat. Crit. t. i. 280.

SECT. IV.

Of the Revival of the Doctrine of Parmenides.

THOSE circumstances attending the Aristotelian philosophy, which contributed towards the revival of the Grecian sects, led in a single instance to the restoration of the physical doctrine of Parmenides. Aristotle having obscured the subject of natural philosophy, by involving it in metaphysical subtlety, Telesius attempted to raise a new edifice of physics, on the foundation of principles, which Parmenides had long before taught in Greece.

Bernard Telesius,²⁰ a Neapolitan, born in the year 1508, received the first part of his education at Milan, where he acquired a perfect knowledge of the Latin and Greek Languages. After passing two years at Rome, where he made great proficiency in polite learning, he removed to Padua, and applied with indefatigable assiduity to the study of mathematics and philosophy. He very judiciously employed mathematical learning in explaining and establishing the laws of physics, and was particularly successful in investigating truths before unknown in the doctrine of optics. Accustomed to mathematical accuracy, he grew dissatisfied with the conjectural explanation of natural appearances given by Aristotle, and expressed great surprise that this philosopher should have been, for so many ages, followed in his numerous errors by so many learned men, by whole nations, and almost by the whole human race. He pursued his researches with great ingenuity as well as freedom, and wrote two books "On Nature," in which he attempted to overturn the physical doctrine of the Peripatetic school, and to explain the phenomena of the material world upon new principles. When this treatise was first published at Rome, it obtained great and unexpected applause, and Telesius was prevailed upon, by the importunity of his friends at Naples, to open a school of philosophy in that city. The Telesian school soon became fa-

²⁰ Toppii Bibl. Neap. p. 344. Pantapolog. Calab. Neap. 1715. Imp. Mus. p. 70. Comnen. Papadopol. Hist. Gymn. Patav. p. ii. c. 32. Letter. de Vit. Teles. Lips. 1733. Teisser Elog. t. iii. p. 449.

mous, not only for the number of its pupils, but for the abilities of its professors, who distinguished themselves by their bold opposition to the doctrines of Aristotle, and by the judicious manner in which they distributed their labours, in order to enlarge the boundaries of natural knowledge. The founder of the school was highly esteemed by all who were desirous of studying nature rather than dialectics; and he was patronized by several great men, particularly by Ferdinand, Duke of Nuceri. But his popularity soon awakened the jealousy and envy of the monks, who loaded him and his school with calumny, for no other offence, than that he ventured to call in question the authority of Aristotle. The vexations which he suffered from this quarter brought on a bilious disorder, which, in 1688, terminated in his death.

Although, during the life of Telesius, his innovations were patiently borne, both in Rome and Naples; after his death his writings were proscribed in the *Index Expurgatorius* of the holy inquisition. Notwithstanding which, his philosophy continued to have many admirers, and his works were republished at Venice, in the year 1590, by his friend Antonius Persius, who also wrote a compendium of his philosophy in the vernacular tongue. Besides his principal work, *De Natura Rerum*, "On the Nature of Things," he wrote on the Air, the Sea, Comets, the Milky Way, the Rainbow, Colours, Respiration, Sleep, and other subjects. Lord Bacon has given a brief explanation of the philosophy of Telesius.⁵¹

The physical system which Telesius attempted to substitute in the room of the subtleties and fictions of the Stagyrite, was founded upon the Parmenidean doctrine, that the first principles in nature, by means of which all natural phenomena are produced, are cold and heat. The sum of his theory is this: Matter, which is in itself incapable of action, and admits neither of increase nor diminution; is acted upon by two contrary incorporeal principles, heat and cold. From the perpetual opposition of these arise the several forms in nature; the prevalence of cold in the lower regions producing the earth and terrestrial bodies;

⁵¹ De Principiis Parmenidis et Telcii.

and that of heat in the superior, the heavens and celestial bodies. All the changes of natural bodies are owing to this conflict; and according to the degree in which each principle prevails, are the different degrees of density, resistance, opacity, moisture, dryness, &c. which are found in different substances. In the heavens, heat has its fixed residence, without any opposition from the contrary principle; and within the earth, and in the abyss of the sea, cold remains undisturbed, heat not being able to penetrate thither. At the borders of each of these regions, that contest between the opposite principles begins, which is carried on through all the intermediate space. All animal and vegetable life is from God.⁵²

This system, which Telesius evidently borrowed from Parmenides, whose doctrine is particularly described in Plutarch's treatise *De Primo Frigido*, "On the Principle of Cold," was exceedingly ingenious; but it is, after all, nothing more than a baseless fabric, raised upon a fanciful conversion of mere attributes and properties into substantial principles. For, as Lord Bacon well observes, Telesius, no less than Plato or Aristotle, places abstract notions at the foundation of his system, and produces his world of real beings from nonentities. We readily admit that this philosopher was a lover of truth, and a friend to science; but we think him chiefly commendable for the boldness of his attack upon the principles of Aristotle, in which he succeeded much better than in his attempt to raise a new structure of natural philosophy; for in changing the attributes of matter into incorporeal principles, he left his doctrine exposed to the same objection, which he himself had brought against that of Aristotle. It was probably owing to this cause, that the Telesian system did not long survive its author.⁵³

⁵² Teles. de Natura rerum juxta propria Principia. Neap. 1686. Morhoff. Polyhist. t. ii. l. ii. p. i. c. 13.

⁵³ Vidend. Bacon's Hist. of Winds, Pref. and on the Fable of Cupid. v. iii. p. 238. Gimma Idea Hist. Lit. Ital. t. ii. c. 38. Campanell. Philos. Sensibus demonstr. Sorell. de Perfect Homin. p. iii. p. 413. Arnold Diss. de Novitate Philosophandi. § 11.

SECT. V.

On the Revival of the Ionic Philosophy.

THE Ionic philosophy, notwithstanding the celebrity of its first professors, soon failed in the Grecian schools, and never afterwards recovered its ancient reputation and authority. This was owing to the suspicion of impiety under which it lay in Athens, to the early growth of new branches from the Socratic stock, and to the rise and spread of the Eleatic and Epicurean philosophy. In later times, the universal prevalence of the Platonic and Aristotelian systems prevented every idea of reviving the physiology of the Ionic school, till, in the seventeenth century, an attempt was made for this purpose by Berigard, but in so circumspect and covert a manner, that this philosopher was commonly ranked among the followers of Aristotle, and even supposed to be deeply tinctured with the impiety of his system.

*Claud Berigard*⁵⁴ was born at Molena, in Spain, in the year 1592, and studied first at Aix, then at Paris, and afterwards at Pisa. In this latter school he was, through the favour of the Duke of Tuscany, appointed professor of mathematics and botany. The fame of his learning, which was spread through Italy, induced the republic of Venice, in the year 1640, to appoint him with a liberal stipend, professor of philosophy in Padua. He was afterwards raised to the dignity of first professor, and received a large augmentation of his salary. He remained in this situation till his death, which happened about the year 1668, and was esteemed one of the most eminent of the Italian philosophers. He published, in 1632, under a fictitious name, a work entitled *Dubitaciones in Dialogos Galilæi de Terræ Immobilitate*,⁵⁵ "Doubts on the Dialogues of Galileo in Defence of the Immobility of the Earth;" but his principal work is his *Circuli Pisani*, "Pisan Circles," in which he relates the disputations which were held at Pisa on the physical writings of Aristotle, and gives his own sentiments upon them.

⁵⁴ Bayle. Niceron. Mem. t. xxxi. p. 123. Præf. Circ. Pis. Epist. Welschii ad Bosium apud Ep. Reines. et Bos. p. 470.

⁵⁵ Ed. Amst. 1649.

Berigard, during his education at Paris, where the defects of the Peripatetic system were now freely examined, had been led to compare the doctrines of the Stagyrice with those of other philosophers, both ancient and modern, and had perceived the folly of that implicit obedience which had been so long paid to his authority. Hence he became a determined opponent of his philosophy, not indeed openly, for he could not have done this without great hazard, but in the indirect and concealed method of dialogue. Adopting the Ionic system, as it was first instituted by Thales, and afterwards improved by Anaxagoras, he framed a disputation between the Aristotelians and Ionics, in which he made Aristæus refute the reasoning of Charilaus, and support the doctrine of the Ionic school, by an appeal to experience, as well as by many ingenious arguments. This acute reasoner saw, indeed, and confessed, that both the Peripatetic and the Ionic systems were materially defective, and in many particulars erroneous, and was, on this account, much inclined to philosophical scepticism. But he endeavoured to prove, that the followers of Thales approached nearer to truth than those of Aristotle, the dangerous tendency of whose tenets, in several particulars, he clearly exposed. Among the doctrines of the Stagyrice, those which he chiefly reprobated were these: That the world is eternal; that the residence of the First Mover is confined to the outer sphere of the universe; that neither the world, nor any being, can properly be said to have been created; and that there is one soul common to the whole human species. In opposition to these opinions, which he rejected as capital errors whence many others must arise, Berigard maintained the Ionic doctrine of the eternity of the primary particles of matter; of a forming and presiding Mind, by whose agency these particles were collected into distinct bodies; and of the combination and dispersion of these, as constituting the formation and dissolution of all things. In short, Berigard seems to have prepared the way for the revival of the Atomic system of Epicurus, which was, soon after this time, restored and defended by Gassendi.⁵⁶

* Vidend. Morhoff. Polyh. t. ii. p. 154. Laun. de Fortuna Arist. in Acad. Par. c. 15. Seb. Basson. Præf. Nat. Phil. Ed. Genev. Sorell. de

SECT. VI.

Of the Revival of the Stoic Philosophy.

As the poverty of the Peripatetic physics occasioned the revival of the Parmenidean and Ionic sects, so the barrenness of the Ethical doctrine taught in the school of Aristotle prompted the design of renewing the Stoic philosophy. Finding little satisfaction in Aristotle's moral precepts, which extend no further than to the conduct of civil life, and disgusted with the thorny disputations of the Scholastics, Lipsius, a name celebrated among the critics of the sixteenth century, determined to pass over into a field of philosophy, in which he hoped to exercise his faculties with greater advantage.

*Justus Lipsius*⁷ was born near Brussels, in the year 1547, and received the first rudiments of learning under his uncle, Martin Lipsius, a learned friend of Erasmus, who was engaged with him in editing several ecclesiastical writings. At twelve years of age, Lipsius was sent to the Jesuits' College at Cologne, where he prosecuted his literary and philosophical studies. Among the ancients, he learned the precepts of morality from Epictetus and Seneca, and the maxims of civil prudence from Tacitus. From Cologne he removed to Louvain, where he studied civil law, and at nineteen wrote his *Varia Lectiōes*, "Various Readings," which laid the foundation of his literary fame. Travelling into Italy he obtained the patronage of the cardinal, Antonius Perenettus, and was appointed his secretary. This situation afforded him leisure and opportunity for prosecuting his philological studies, and gave him access to many learned men, and to the Vatican and other public libraries. After two years he returned to Louvain, enriched with new stores of learning, but by no means improved in his manners; for at Rome

Perfect. Hom. p. iii. p. 484. Reimann. Hist. Ath. s. iii. c. 5. Villenhardy
Scept. de bell. p. 11.

⁷ Lips. Vlt. a Mirab. Antw. 1608. Adam. Vlt. p. 11. p. 11. p. 11. p. 11.
Pinaoth. iii. c. 1. Bayle. Teisser. Elog. t. iv. p. 524. Blount. p. 840.
Patin. Lettres, t. ii. Lett. 394.

he acquired a fondness for pleasure, which led him, for a time, into many excesses. The public disturbances induced him, about the twenty-fifth year of his age, to leave his native country and visit Vienna, where he became acquainted with Busbequius, and other learned men. On his return, he suffered himself to be detained at Jena, in Thuringia, where he accepted the professorship of eloquence, and became a disciple of Luther. This latter circumstance obliged him, after a year's residence, to leave Jena; and he removed to Cologne, where he married a widow, whose ill temper occasioned him much uneasiness. At Cologne, where he remained only a few months, he wrote his *Antiquæ Lectiones*, "Ancient Readings." He now determined to return to his native place, and devote himself wholly to study; but the civil commotions of the country obliged him to remove first to Louvain, and afterwards to Leyden, where he spent thirteen years in literary labours. Here, though nominally a convert to the Reformation, he publicly maintained the principles of persecution, and wrote a treatise On Politics, in which he inveighed against toleration, and maintained that one religion only should be professed in one state, and that those who opposed that religion ought to be pursued with fire and sword, it being better that one member should be destroyed, than that the whole body should perish. This doctrine, so favourable to the cruel persecution at this time exercised by the Spaniards against the Protestants, excited a just indignation against Lipsius, in a state which owed its existence to a brave and successful assertion of the rights of conscience. The resentment which on this account fell upon him from various quarters, created him so much vexation, that upon republishing his works, he subjoined a note to one of his most offensive passages, in which he says, *Verba nata in turbas! perissent illa et calamus, cum hæc scripsi!* "Mischievous words! Oh that they had perished with the pen that wrote them!"* It does not appear, however, that Lipsius ever abandoned his intolerant principles; for after a short time he left Leyden, and, through the solicitation of the Jesuits, or, as some

* Politic. l. iv. c. 3. Not.

say, through the importunity of his wife, he returned into the bosom of the Roman church. He spent the remainder of his life at Louvain, and tarnished his literary reputation by writing several books, which were tinctured with the weakest credulity and superstition, particularly his *Laudes divæ Virginis Halensis*, "Praise of the Holy Virgin of Hall;" in which he celebrates the miracles of that famous image. After giving these and other unequivocal proofs of anility, Lipsius died in the year 1606.

It appears both from the life and writings of Lipsius, that he had more learning than either genius or judgment. His ambition disturbed the tenour of his life with various vicissitudes; and he had a degree of fickleness in religious principles, which carried him at one time to the verge of scepticism, and at another into the borders of enthusiasm. His writings, which are numerous, chiefly turn upon subjects of antiquity and criticism. In his early pieces, he imitated, with tolerable success, the style of Cicero; but afterwards chose rather to adopt the concise and pointed manner of Seneca and Tacitus. For this corruption of taste he was severely censured by Scioppius and Henry Stephens; but his example was followed by several contemporary writers. On this innovation Huet justly remarks,⁵⁹ that although the abrupt and antithetical style may obtain the applauses of unskilful youth, or an illiterate multitude, it cannot be pleasing to ears which have been long inured to genuine Ciceronian eloquence.

Captivated with the appearance of superior wisdom and virtue which he observed in the ancient school of Zeno, Lipsius sought for consolation from the precepts of the Stoic philosophy, and attempted to reconcile its doctrines with those of Christianity. But he was imposed upon by the vaunting language of this school concerning fate and providence; and explains its tenets in a manner which cannot be reconciled with the history and general system of Stoicism. In order to revive an attention to the doctrines of this ancient sect, he wrote two treatises, *Manuductio ad Philosophicam Stoicam*, "An Introduction to the Stoic Philosophy;" and *Dissertationes de Physiologia Stoicæ*.

⁵⁹ De clar. Interp. p. 292.

"Dissertation on Stoic Physiology;" to which he intended to have added a treatise on the moral doctrine of the Stoics, but was prevented by death. His edition of Seneca is enriched with many valuable notes, but he was too much biassed by his partiality for Stoicism to perceive the feeble and unsound parts of the system, and gave too easy credit to the arrogant claims of this school, to be a judicious and useful interpreter of its doctrine. Besides the philosophical works already mentioned, he wrote a treatise *De Constantia*, "On Constancy," and *Politicorum Libri Sex*, "A Treatise on Politics, in six books." This latter work, though highly censurable for its intolerant spirit, is of some value as a compilation of the sentiments of the ancients on the subject of policy.

A few learned men followed the footsteps of Lipsius, and endeavoured to revive the credit of the Stoic philosophy. *Gasper Scioppus*,⁶⁰ a German writer, who flourished about the beginning of the seventeenth century, more famous for the violence of his temper, and the severity with which he censured the writings of others, than for any essential service to learning or philosophy, wrote *Elementa Philosophiæ Stoicæ Moralis*, "Elements of the Moral Philosophy of the Stoics." *Daniel Heinsius* was a great admirer of the moral doctrine of the Stoics, and wrote an elegant "Oration in Praise of the Stoic Philosophy." But the most able advocate for this system among the moderns was *Thomas Gataker*, born at London, in the year 1574, and educated at St. John's College, Cambridge. He was afterwards fellow of Sydney College, and lecturer at Lincoln's Inn. Among other learned works, he wrote a "Commentary on the Meditations of Antoninus," containing every thing which a most extensive knowledge of the ancients could furnish, towards the illustration of his author, and of the Stoic system. It is, however, to be regretted, that such a learned and able writer should have suffered himself to be so far blinded by partiality for the Porch, as to give a representation of its doctrines by no means consistent with the fundamental principles of the sect.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Bayle. Reiman. Hist. Lit. Germ. p. v. p. 188.

⁶¹ Vidend. Budd. in Phil. St. in Amæctis Hist. Ph. Thomas de Ex-
ustione Mundi. Boecler. Diss. de Polit. Lipsii.

SECT. VII.

Of the Revival of the Epicurean Philosophy.

THE Atomic doctrine concerning the origin of nature, which was taught by Democritus, and was reduced into a regular system by Epicurus, through the general prevalence given in later times to the Platonic, or the Aristotelian philosophy, had now for many centuries lain dormant. But after the revival of letters there were not wanting several learned men, who, finding little satisfaction in the obscure and subtle speculations of metaphysics, had recourse to the doctrine of Epicurus, as the true key to the mysteries of nature.

The first restorer of the Epicurean system among the moderns, was *Daniel Sennert*,⁶² an ancient physician of Wittenburg, who flourished at the beginning of the seventeenth century. In a distinct chapter of his *Hypomnemata Physica*, "Heads of Physica," treating of atoms and mixture, he embraces the Atomic system, which he derives from Mochus, the Phenician. He supposes that the primary corpuscles not only unite in the formation of bodies, but that in their mutual action and passion they undergo such modifications, that they cease to be what they were before their union; and maintains, that by their combination all material forms are produced. Sennert, however, confounded the corpuscles of the more ancient philosophers with the atoms of Democritus and Epicurus, and held that each element has primary particles peculiar to itself.

The same doctrine was taught, with some inconsiderable variations, by *Chrysostom Magnenus*,⁶³ professor of medicine in the University of Pavia, who, in the year 1646, published "A Treatise on the Life and Philosophy of Democritus."⁶⁴ His system is rendered obscure by an attempt to unite the incompatible dogmas of Epicurus and Aristotle.

⁶² Ejus Hypomnemat. Phys. l. iii. c. 1. p. 86. Ed. 1658.

⁶³ Moshoff, t. ii. l. ii. p. 4. c. 27.

⁶⁴ Lugd. Bat. 1648. Hag. Com. 1658.

The ablest and most successful attempt towards the revival of the physical and moral philosophy of Epicurus was made by *Peter Gassendi*,⁶⁵ who deservedly holds an eminent place among the philosophers of the last century. He was born in the year 1592, near Digne, in Provence, and studied first at Digne, and afterwards at Aix, where, at the age of sixteen, he was appointed teacher of rhetoric, and at nineteen, professor of philosophy. Although the authority of Aristotle was still acknowledged in almost all public schools, Gassendi, after the example of Vives, Ramus, and others, ventured publicly to expose the defects of his system. The lectures which contained his censures of the Aristotelian philosophy, delivered in the indirect form of paradoxical problems, were published under the title of *Exercitationes paradoxicae adversus Aristotelem*,⁶⁶ "Paradoxical Exercises against Aristotle." This work, at the same time that it gave great offence to those who still retained their predilection for Scholastic subtlety, obtained the author no small degree of reputation with several learned men, particularly with Nicolas Pieresc, the president of the university at Aix, through whose interest Gassendi was admitted to the degree of doctor of divinity, and created a canon of the church of Digne. A second volume of this work was afterwards published, the immediate design of which was to expose the futility of the Aristotelian logic. It was his first intention to pursue the plan still further, but the violent opposition which he met with from the zealous and powerful advocates for the authority of Aristotle, induced him to desist from all direct attacks upon his philosophy. He still, however, professed his attachment to the system of Epicurus, and defended it with great learning and ability.

In order to extend his acquaintance with the learned, Gassendi visited Holland, where his philosophical and literary merit soon procured him many admirers and friends: he formed an intimacy with the learned Mersenus, and wrote an elegant and judicious apology for him in reply to the censures of Robert Fludd, on the subject of the Mosaic philosophy. On his return to France, he was, through

⁶⁵ Sorbiere de Vit. Gass. Præf. Synt. Phil. Epic. Blount. p. 965. Bayle.

⁶⁶ Amst. 1649. Hag. Comet. 1656. 8vo.

the interest of Cardinal Richieu's brother, appointed Regius Professor of mathematics at Paris. In this university he also read lectures on astronomy, a science which he had studied from his earliest years. In this situation Gassendi acquired great popularity; and rose to high expectations; but after a few years, the fatigues of his office brought an inflammation upon his lungs, which obliged him to leave Paris, and return to Digne. Here he obtained some relief, and came back to Paris: but his complaint shortly returned, and he died in the year 1655. Just before he expired, he laid his hand upon his heart, and remarking the feeble state of its pulsation, he said to his attendant, "See how frail is the life of man!"

The sound judgment, extensive reading, and capacious memory of Gassendi, qualified him to attain great distinction among philosophers. He is ranked by Barrow among the most eminent mathematicians of the age; and mentioned with Galileo, Gilbert, and Des Cartes. His commentary on the tenth book of Diogenes Laertius is a sufficient proof of his erudition. With uncommon abilities for the task, he undertook to frame from Lucretius, Laertius, and other ancient writers, a consistent scheme of Epicurean doctrine, in which the phenomena of nature are immediately derived from the motion of primary atoms. But he was aware of the fundamental defect of this system, and added to it the important doctrine of a Divine Superintending Mind, from whom he conceived the first motion and subsequent arrangement of atoms to have been derived, and whom he regarded as the wise Governor of the world. Gassendi strenuously maintained the Atomic doctrine in opposition to the fictions of the Cartesian philosophy, which were at that time obtaining great credit; and particularly asserted, in opposition to Des Cartes, the doctrine of a Vacuum. On the subject of morals, Gassendi explained the permanent pleasure or indolence of Epicurus, in a manner perfectly consistent with the purest precepts of virtue.

Gassendi wrote many treatises, which were, after his death, collected, and published in six volumes,⁹⁷ by Sor-

⁹⁷ Lugd. 1658.

biographer. Among these, one of the most valuable is his "Life of Epicurus," in which he undertakes to rescue that philosopher from the load of calumny under which his memory had for many ages lain, as well as to give a fair and impartial representation of his doctrine.

The most celebrated followers of Gassendi were *Francis Bernier*,⁶⁸ a physician of Montpellier, who, besides his "Travels into the East," wrote an "Abridgment of Gassendi's Philosophy,"⁶⁹ and *Walter Charlton*, an Englishman, who wrote a treatise entitled *Physiologia Epicureo-Gassendo-Charltoniana*,⁷⁰ in which he attempts to establish natural science upon atomic principles. A similar treatise was published by *G. B. De Sancto Romano*, a physician at Paris, under the title of *Physica à Scholasticis Tricis liberata*,⁷¹ "Physics rescued from Scholastic Jargon."

The doctrine of atoms and a vacuum has been embraced by the most eminent modern philosophers. Huygens applies it to explain the cause of gravitation, and Newton admits it into his theory of natural philosophy.*

⁶⁸ Budd. Hist. Ph. p. 376. Morhoff. t. ii. p. 273.

⁶⁹ Par. 1678.

⁷⁰ Lond. 1654.

⁷¹ Lugd. Bat. 1684. 12°.

⁷² Vidend. Mercklin. Linden. Renov. p. 554. Lettre critique et historique de la Vie Gassendi, Par. 1737. 12°. Desseli Bibl. Belg. Miræus de Scr. Sec. xvi. c. 237. Simon Bibl. crit. P. iv. p. 100. Stoll. Hist. Lit. P. ii. c. 2. § 49. Gerard. de Uries. Diss. de Gassend. Traj. ad Rhod. 1691. Regnaut Entretiens d'Ariste et Eudoxe. Bayle Lettres, t. ii. p. 829.

BOOK IX.

OF MODERN PHILOSOPHERS, WHO HAVE ATTEMPTED NEW METHODS OF PHILOSOPHIZING.

CHAP. I.

OF MODERN SCEPTICS.

FROM the first revival of letters, the philosophical world was, as we have seen, almost entirely occupied in restoring the Sectarian philosophy of the ancients. Learned men were either too diffident of their talents to suppose themselves capable of any new discoveries, too indolent to attempt them, or too much prejudiced in favour of antiquity to suppose it possible that any improvement could be made upon Grecian wisdom. During the course of several centuries, only a few enterprising or eccentric geniuses arose, who ventured to disengage themselves from the yoke of authority, and presumed to think it possible, that, with the same natural faculties which the ancients enjoyed, and with the example before them both of their successes and failures, new and important advances might be made in knowledge. Of these, some, availing themselves of all that was valuable in the stores of ancient philosophy, and at the same time exerting their own talents with a happy union of freedom and caution, made important improvements in philosophy. Whilst others, either on the one side through an excessive confidence in the powers of the human mind, or on the other through too much distrust of their weakness, forsook the straight path of rational inquiry, and lost themselves in the mazes of scepticism or enthusiasm. Vanity has inclined some to contradict every decision of philosophy, and hastily to conclude the

Francis Sanchez,² a Portuguese physician, born in the year 1562, after having studied in France and Italy, became a preceptor in philosophy in the college of Thou-louse. According to the established law of the college, he lectured upon Peripatetic principles; but his penetrating genius, superior to vulgar prejudices, could not satisfy itself with a kind of philosophy replete with vague opinions, and rather fitted to obstruct than to facilitate the pursuit of knowledge. The fate of Peter Ramus, who, about this time, fell a victim to the resentment of the Aristotelians, prevented him, however, from hazarding a direct attack upon their system; and he determined to take the more general ground of scepticism, in opposition to dogmatists of every sect. In a work, *De multum nobili et prima universali Scientia, quod nihil scitur*,³ "On the very excellent and first universal Science, that nothing is known," he reprobates the confidence of those philosophers who advance, as indubitable and fundamental truths, such principles as are in their nature exceedingly doubtful. This treatise, which was chiefly intended as an attack upon the Scholastic philosophy, but extends its hostilities even to the foundations of science, discovers much learning and ingenuity.

With different views was the cause of Scepticism espoused by *Jerom Hernhaym*, a learned abbot of Prague, who wrote a book *De Typho Generis Humani*,⁴ "On the vain Glory of Human Nature," in which he endeavours to expose the presumption, uncertainty, and falsehood of human science; a work, as the author professes, written for the relief of the unlearned, and for the admonition of the learned. The evident design of this writer was to depreciate human learning as inimical to Divine wisdom, and to recommend an indolent life as the only way to attain perfection and felicity. As the most effectual cure of philosophical vanity, he endeavours to prove, that all the vices of mankind are to be ultimately traced up to human science. He maintains the absolute imbecility of the human understanding, and the uncertainty of all information from the senses, and ascribes every appearance of wisdom

² Raymund. Delass. Præf. Op. N. Anton. Bibl. Hisp. p. 262. Bayle,

³ Frankf. 1618. Rotterd. 1649.

⁴ Prague, 1676: 4to.

among men to supernatural Divine illuminations. The scepticism of this writer appears to have been the effect of perverted piety, and may serve to prove, that religion itself is no sure guide to men who disclaim the use and authority of reason.

Scepticism found a much more able and elegant advocate in *Francis Vayer de la Mothe*,⁵ justly reckoned one of the most learned men of his age. He was born at Paris, in the year 1586. His literary merit recommended him to the attention of the great, and he was appointed preceptor to the Dauphin in 1652. He enjoyed the friendship of the celebrated French ministers, the cardinals Richlieu and Mazarin. He lived to the age of eighty-six. In the writings of Vayer are found an elegance of genius, and extent of reading, which has obtained him the appellation of the Modern Plutarch. Of his numerous works, those which chiefly mark his sceptical turn are, his treatise "On the Philosophy of the Heathens," in which he treats of the uncertainty of the senses; and his "Five Dialogues," under the name of *Oratius Tubero*, in which he applauds the Sceptic philosophy. To these were afterwards added four other dialogues, which breathe the same spirit. Vayer was an avowed advocate for scepticism in every branch of science; and though, like many other writers of the same school, he professed great reverence for the authority of the church, and inferred the necessity of revelation from the uncertainty of all human knowledge, he nevertheless fell under the censure of impiety. Among his disciples were *Sorbiere*, who translated part of Sextus Empiricus into French; and *Fouchier*, who wrote a "History of the Academic Philosophy."⁶

Another celebrated defender of Scepticism was *Peter Daniel Huet*,⁷ born of an illustrious family at Caen, in the year 1630. After passing through the usual course of juvenile learning, in which he discovered no inconsiderable talent for poetry, he applied with great diligence to the study of mathematics and philosophy under a Jesuit, Peter

⁵ Pellison. Hist. de l'Ac. Fr. p. 234. Bayle. Boileau, Sat. iv.

⁶ Op. Ed. Sox Tomis, Par. 1069.

⁷ Huet. de rebus ad eum pertinentibus, Ed. 1718. Hag. Niceron. Mem. t. 1.

Mambrun. The Cartesian philosophy being now generally received, Huet eagerly embraced it, and for several years continued zealously attached to this new system. At a more mature age, however, when he came to examine its foundations more accurately, he saw reason to abandon it as a visionary fabric. At the age of seventeen, in order to qualify himself for the study of antiquity, the desire of which was excited by reading *Geographia Sacra*, the "Sacred Geography," of the learned Bochart, whose personal friendship he enjoyed, the study of the Greek and Hebrew languages became the principal object of his attention. In the university of Paris, to which he removed about the age of twenty, he devoted himself almost entirely to society, and formed an intimate acquaintance with many learned men, among whom were Petau, Labbe, Cossart, Vavassor, and Rapin. With Petau, in particular, he passed much of his time. He was a great admirer of the splendour of his diction, and the variety of his erudition; but he confesses, that in weighing the arguments which he offered in support of his dogmas, he perceived in them a degree of weakness and ambiguity, which obliged him to suspend his assent, and inclined him towards scepticism. Naturally excelling rather in genius than in judgment, and the vigour of his understanding having been rather repressed than improved by an immense variety of reading, Huet found his mind too feeble to master the difficulties of metaphysical and theological studies, and concluded that his want of success in the search after truth was owing, not to any peculiar infelicity in his own case, but to the general imbecility of the human mind.

With this bias towards scepticism Huet entered upon his travels. His friend Bochart having, through the recommendation of Isaac Vossius, been invited by that celebrated patroness of learning, Christina, daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, Huet accompanied him. On their way, they passed through Holland and Denmark, and became acquainted with the most celebrated scholars of these countries. The queen, upon their arrival, received them with every mark of attention. Huet, during his stay in Stockholm, was usually occupied in examining the ancient manuscripts in the royal library, and made such use of his

time as proved very advantageous to the learned world. He copied certain commentaries of Origen, which he afterwards published and illustrated with excellent notes, explaining the history and opinions of that celebrated father. Having visited on his way several seminaries of learning, he returned to Caen, where he remained for a time, and after completing his *Originenia*, wrote his dialogue *De Interpretatione et claris Interpretibus*, "On Translations and famous Translators," which was well received in the learned world. Here he also instituted a society for the improvement of natural philosophy and anatomy, which, through the interest of Colbert, was liberally endowed by the king, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of philosophical experiments and anatomical dissections. About this time Huet formed a friendship with Cormissus, president of the senate of Aix, who came to reside at Caen. This new intimacy very much contributed to confirm Huet in his propensity towards scepticism. For Cormissus, who was well read in ancient philosophy, was a great admirer of the Pyrrhonic sect, and earnestly recommended to his friend the study of Pyrrhonism in the institutes of Sextus Empiricus.

The literary reputation of Huet procured him the notice of Louis the Fourteenth, who, by the advice of Colbert, appointed him, together with Bossuet, preceptor to the Dauphin. Upon this he removed to Paris, where the labours of his new office did not prevent him from prosecuting his private studies. It was in this situation that he wrote his celebrated defence of the Christian religion, entitled *Demonstratio Evangelica*, "A Demonstration of the Truth of Christianity," in which he undertakes to exhibit the evidences of Christianity in a geometrical form; a work, which indeed discovers great erudition, but in which the judicious reader will perceive, that the writer was more desirous to display his learning, than to establish the Christian faith upon rational grounds. In his preface to this work, he maintains at large the uncertainty of all human knowledge, whether derived from the senses or from reason, and declares it as his opinion, that those methods of philosophizing which lead to a suspension of judgment are by no means hostile to Christianity, but serve to prepare the mind

for an implicit submission to Divine revelation, which it is in vain to attempt to establish by argumentation without the grace of God. Accordingly he professes to write his "Demonstration," merely as an extraneous and adventitious support to faith, by means of which the mind may be more easily inclined to submit itself to the authority of Christ.

After having passed ten years at court, Huet, at the age of forty-five, retired into monastic life, and was chosen abbot of the monastery of Alnet. In this tranquil retreat he prosecuted the design he had long formed of defending the Sceptic philosophy, and wrote a work entitled *Questiones Alnetanæ*,⁸ "Alnetane Queries," in which he endeavours to fix the respective limits of reason and faith, and maintains, that the dogmas and precepts of each have no alliance, and that there is nothing, however contradictory to common sense, or to good morals, which has not been received, and which we may not be bound to receive, as a dictate of faith. He honestly confesses, that he wrote this work to establish the authority of tradition against the empire of reason. On the same principle, and with no better success, he attempted to refute the principles of the Cartesian philosophy, in his *Censura Philosophiæ Cartesianæ*,⁹ "Censure of the Cartesian Philosophy;" he also wrote a treatise, *De Fabulis Romanensibus*,¹⁰ "On Romance;" and another, *De Navigationibus Solomonis*, "On the Voyages of Solomon," which obtained him much applause among the learned.

In the year 1692, Huet was advanced to the episcopal see of Avranches; but after a few years he resigned this honour, and retired to the abbey of Fontenay. He spent his last days in the Jesuits' college at Paris, and left his valuable library as a legacy to their society. He died in the year 1721. After his death appeared minutes of his life, under the title of *Commentarium de Rebus ad eum pertinentibus*, "A Commentary on his own Affairs," written by himself in his old age, and "A Dissertation on the Weakness of the Human Understanding," in which the sceptical spirit, which followed Huet through every change of situation, appears in its full vigour. Of this work, which

⁸ Ed. Lips. 1719. 4to.⁹ Paris, 1670.¹⁰ Par. 1694.

was originally written in French, the author left behind him a Latin translation. Little is done in this treatise more than to exhibit the chief heads of the Sceptic philosophy, as given by Sextus Empiricus, and to collect from the history of philosophy such particulars as might seem to recommend the Pyrrhonic method of philosophizing, and prove the insufficiency of the human mind to arrive at the knowledge of truth.

On the whole, though it cannot be questioned that Huet, on account of his great learning and fertile genius, may justly claim to have his name preserved with honour in the republic of letters, several circumstances must prevent us from ranking him among the first philosophers of the seventeenth century. Better qualified to accumulate testimonies than to investigate truth, and more disposed to raise difficulties than to solve them, he was an injudicious advocate for a good cause. If we are not very much mistaken, Huet did not strictly adhere to the Scholastic art of reasoning which he had learned in the schools of the Jesuits; otherwise he must have seen, that there can be no room for faith, or for what he artfully conceals under that name, the authority of the church, if every criterion of truth be rejected, and human reason be pronounced a blind and fallacious guide.

Not inferior to Huet in learning, and much his superior in strength of judgment and keenness of wit, was *Peter Bayle*,¹¹ justly reckoned one of the most powerful advocates for Pyrrhonism. He was born at Carlat, in Foix, in the year 1647. His father was a member of the reformed church, and instructed him in the Greek and Latin languages, and in other branches of learning, till he was nineteen years of age, when he entered upon his academic studies in the Jesuits' college at Thoulouse. So insatiable was his thirst for knowledge, that by incessant application he impaired his constitution, and was twice in danger of losing his life; notwithstanding which, with return of health his love of study returned, and he read with great avidity authors both ancient and modern in every branch of learning. Among the ancients his principal favourite was Plu-

¹¹ Vit. a Des Maizeaux. Basnag. Reuest. Masson. Limier. Nicéron. Conf. Epist. et Diction.

A barrister among the lawyers, on one hand; and from the same writers he probably derived his first ideas towards scepticism. At the age of twenty he engaged in the study of logic, and afterwards expressed his regret that he had not sooner made himself master of this art. One of his college companions, a Romish priest, observing the unsettled state of his mind, prevailed upon him to submit his judgment to the authority of the church; and, not without much surprise and regret on the part of his friends, he made a public profession of the Catholic faith. Not long afterwards, however, he was induced by the arguments and persuasion of his brother, a Protestant ecclesiastic, to recant his precipitate conversion, and return to the profession of the reformed religion. As apostasy from the Catholic faith was at that time a capital offence in France, Bayle found it necessary to leave the kingdom, and in the year 1670, retired to Geneva. Here he studied the Cartesian philosophy, and saw reason to adopt it in preference to the heterogeneous system of the Scholastic doctrine, which he had despised in the schools of the Jesuits; still, however, retaining the freedom of thought, which led him, with Hermaeus, to examine all sects, but withers tenaciously to none. Through the intercession of his friends, Bayle, in the year 1676, obtained permission to visit Paris, where the society of the most learned men, and the use of the best libraries, enabled him to prosecute his studies with great advantage. Through the interest of Basnage, then his intimate friend, he obtained the philosophical chair in the university of Paris; and within two years, from that time, he wrote a system of philosophy for the use of his pupils. In this situation he entered into a controversy with Poinsson — the subject of his treatise, entitled *Cogitationes rationales de Deo, homine, et Mundo*; “Rational Thoughts on God, the Man, and the World.” Which Poinsson continued a Cartesian, he attacked his antagonist with temper; but when he became a *Cartesien*, he attacked him with the utmost rancour. In 1680, Bayle engaged in a dispute with Yalensis, a Jesuit, upon the Cartesian notion of Extension, in which he opposed, to wit, good indignity, the doctrine of transubstantiation. At the same time, a controversy which at this time fell upon all Protestantism in France, obliged Bayle, with many other

learned men, to leave the country and settle in Holland. At the entreaty of one of his former pupils, he made choice of Rotterdam as his place of residence, where, with Jurieu, he founded a new school. He now published a treatise, which, in the year 1681, he had written, but could not obtain licence to print at Paris, his "Thoughts on Comets;" a work replete with various learning, and well adapted to expose the folly of superstition. This was succeeded by a "Critical Dissertation on Maimburg's History of Calvinism;" in which the author employs the Cartesian weapons against the Romish church. Although the work was so well written, that the Prince of Condé confessed himself delighted with it, and even Maimburg acknowledged it to be an excellent book, it was ordered to be publicly burnt at Paris. Nevertheless it had many readers and admirers.

The reputation which Bayle had now acquired as a writer, encouraged him to undertake a literary journal, under the title of *Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres*, "Intelligence from the Republic of Letters," in which he undertook to review the most important new publications. He did not content himself, in this work, with a barren detail of contents, but freely passed his judgment upon the merit of authors, and often illustrated the subject on which they treated by original observations. This work, which was begun in 1684, is justly esteemed one of the most valuable literary journals extant. It was afterwards continued by Basnage, under the title of *Histoire des Ouvrages des Savans*, "The History of the Works of the Learned." In a metaphysical dispute which arose in France, between Arnaud and Mallebranche, on Pleasure, Bayle defended Mallebranche. He wrote a treatise on toleration, entitled, "A Philosophical Commentary on the Words of Christ—Compel them to come in," in which he defended the cause of the Protestants with great eloquence, but with so much freedom, as to offend the more orthodox of the Protestants themselves, and among the rest his friend and colleague Jurieu, with whom he had a long and severe contest. To console himself under the vexations which he experienced from this and other causes, Bayle undertook the design of writing "An Historical and Critical Dictionary," a work which he lived to complete, and which remains as the chief

monument of his learning, genius, and wit, and an indisputable proof of his propensity to Scepticism. The two first volumes of this work appeared in the year 1697, and, contrary to the author's usual manner, they were published with his name. This work contains innumerable illustrations of the history of philosophy, both ancient and modern, and treats many difficult points with the hand of a bold and able critic. But the author is justly censured for indulging a degree of latitude, inconsistent with good morals and decency. In the second edition of this work, published in 1702, the author sent it forth chastised, amended, and enlarged. It was published in English by R. de la Roche, in 1709. Bayle's sceptical spirit further appears in a controversy which he held towards the close of his life, with La Clerc and others, on the doctrine advanced by Cudworth of "Plastic Nature," and "On the Origin of Evil," and "On the Manichæan System." The principal works, in which these controversies are carried on, are *Responsiones ad Provinciales quendam*, "Answers to a certain Provincial;" and *Entretiens de Maxime et Themiste*, "Dialogues of Maximus and Themistius." In the midst of these contests and labours Bayle died, in the year 1706.

Every impartial judge will acknowledge, that Bayle was a man of strong judgment, lively imagination, ready invention, and extensive learning. His friends extol him for many personal virtues. At the same time it must be confessed, that his writings betray a mind impressed with little reverence for religion, and tend to foster that kind of scepticism which is most pernicious.

Upon a comparison of the writings of modern Sceptics, it will appear, that they have adopted this method of philosophizing upon very different grounds, and for different purposes: but in whatever form Scepticism appears, or from whatever cause it springs, it may be confidently pronounced hostile to true philosophy; for its obvious tendency is to invalidate every principle of human knowledge, to destroy every criterion of truth, and to undermine the foundations of all science, human and Divine.*

* *Stillingd. Diss. Writ. Diss. quod aliquid sciatur. Lips. 1662.* *Merville Melanges de Lit. t. ii. p. 328.* *Croix du Maine Bibl. de France, p. 84.* *Budd. Isagog. l. c. 2. l. c. 2.* *Univ. t. xv. p. 330.* *Crousaz. Examen Pyrrhonismi.*

philosophy has its Scylla of Scepticism, it has also its
 Charybdis of Credulity. Whilst some, in shaking off the
 ancient prejudice in favour of the Grecian dogmatists, fell
 into the pernicious error of rejecting at once the authority
 both of reason and revelation, others were of opinion, that
 the only remedy for the weakness of the human understand-
 ing was to have recourse to Divine revelation for all phi-
 losophical as well as theological knowledge. Despising
 the light of reason as a dim taper, wholly incapable of
 discovering the path of truth, these philosophers have con-
 sidered reason and revelation, two sources of knowledge,
 which, though they proceed from the same Author, have
 their distinct limits and uses. Among those who have cho-
 sen this method of philosophizing, some have professed to
 confine themselves to the literal meaning of Scripture, and
 undertaken to derive a system of physics from the writings
 of Moses; and from other parts of the Sacred Volumes;
 and others, disdaining to employ reason even as a hand-
 maid to revelation, have pretended to derive their know-
 ledge of philosophy from immediate inspiration; and, neg-
 lecting the literal sense of Scripture, have, by the help of
 allegory, adapted its language to their enthusiastic notions.
 The former may be called *Scriptural Philosophers*, the lat-
 ter *Enthusiasts*.

In the class of *Scriptural Philosophers*, we do not mean to include those who have applied the Sectarian philosophy to the explanation of Scripture, or the illustration of its doctrine, which was done very successfully, both in logic and physics, by Alsted, Glass, Valesius, Bochart, and others; nor those who have endeavoured to shew the agreement of their system of philosophy, or of the general principles of reason and the natural law of morality, with the doctrine of Scripture. Under the appellation of *Scriptural Philosophers*, we only mean to comprehend those who, **after the example of Philo, and all the Jewish Gabbalists**

who would have thought that the Christian religion would have applied all philosophy to be derived from Divine revelation, and was desirous of being able to arrive at any true knowledge of nature by the light of reason, have had recourse to the sacred oracles, and particularly to the Jewish history of the creation, and endeavoured upon this foundation to raise a new structure of philosophy. From a great multitude of writers who have pursued this track, many of them with little reputation to themselves or benefit to science, it may suffice to select a few, who have been more distinguished than the rest for their learning or ability. The first writer of this class who deserves distinction, is Otto Casman, president of the college at Stade, who flourished about the close of the sixteenth century. He was dissatisfied with the unprofitable subtleties of the Aristotelian philosophy, and determined, in the study of nature, rather to rely upon the decision of the sacred writings, than upon the doctrine of the ancient Heathen philosophers. Even in his explanation of Scripture he refused to call in the assistance of philosophers or rules of interpretation. In a work entitled *Compendium, &c. On the Formation of the World*, he derived his physical doctrine from the Scriptures; and in his *Modest Assertion of true and Christian Philosophy*, he professes to write Christian Institutes of grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, &c. With Casman may be joined Henry Alsted, professor of divinity at Altdorf till 1636, when he died, in his fiftieth year. In his *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, he undertakes to derive the elements of philosophy, jurisprudence, and medicine from the sacred Scriptures; a work which shows more good intention than sound judgment. These writers have treated the books of the sacred Scriptures as some ancient critics treated Homer, who, whilst they pretended to find in him every kind of science and wisdom, suffered the true meaning and spirit of his poems to escape their attention. The *Philosophia Medica*, or *Mosaic Philosophy*, of Pico is liable to the same censure.

Budd. Int. ad Hist. Phil. Heb. § 36. Franc. 1601. 8vo.
Baillet Jugement des Savans, t. ii. p. 388. Paris. Hist. Lit. Gen. p. iii. p. 185.

broad philosophical system attempted with repeated philosophy
 Hingenthal, others will attack, but with no better success, in
 particular branches of science. Gerardus van Swinden, a
 Dutchman, after having been instructed in the family of
 the celebrated astronomer Tycho Brahe, and visited many
 of the principal schools of Europe, was, at the beginning
 of the seventeenth century, made professor of philosophy
 and theology in the University of Copenhagen, and was
 the author of "A System of Christian Ethics and Physics."
 Another celebrated Protestant divine, who
 was a professor of theology at Geneva, wrote a treatise of
 the same kind, entitled "Physico-Christiana, Christian
 Physica." A Scriptural System of Politics was also written
 by Leibniz, and of Natural Law, by Valentin Albert.
 writers, whose works are more calculated to confound than
 to discover truth.
 Among the Scriptural Philosophers must also be reckoned
 those who have written Mosiac Cosmogonies, or attempted
 to give a philosophical explanation of the origin of the
 world on the ground of the Mosiac history of the creation.
 Of these the two principal are Dickinson and Burnet. The
 former, Edmund Dickinson, an English physician, born in 1624,
 wrote a treatise De Physica Veteri et nova, "On true and
 ancient Physics," in which he attempts, from the scrip-
 tural account of the creation, to explain the manner in
 which the world was formed. Assuming, as the ground of
 his theory, the Atonic doctrine, and the existence of an
 immaterial Cause of the concourse of indivisible atoms,
 he supposes the particles of matter agitated by a double
 motion, one gentle and temperate, of the particles among
 themselves, whence elementary corpuscles are formed; the
 other circular, by which the whole mass is revolved; and
 the regions of heaven and earth are produced. By the mat-
 turing of the elementary corpuscles of different magnitude
 and form, he supposes the different bodies of nature to
 have been produced, and attempts, upon this plan, to dis-
 cuss the production of all creation through each of the six
 days. He explains at large the formation of human na-
 ture, showing in what manner, by means of a plastic semi-
 nal virtue, man became an animated being. The theory,

though founded upon conjecture, and loaded with unphilosophical fictions, the author not only pretends to derive from the Mosaic narrative, but maintains to have been consonant to the most ancient Hebrew traditions. The use which this Theorist makes of the doctrine of atoms, shews him to have been wholly unacquainted with the true notion of the ancients on this subject; and indeed the whole work seems to have been the offspring of a confused imagination, rather than of a sound judgment.

The same design was undertaken, and executed with much more learning and ability, by *Thomas Burnet*,³ born in the year 1635, and educated at Cambridge, under Cudworth, and other followers of the Platonic philosophy. Burnet soon discovered, that whatever praise might be due to Plato in theology and morals, he was a very insufficient guide in physics and cosmology. During the course of a literary tour through France, Italy, Holland, and part of Germany, he formed the design of delineating the system of the world according to the Mosaic history of the creation and deluge, and upon his return wrote in Latin the first part of his *Theory of the Earth*. The novelty of his ideas, and the perspicuity and elegance of his style, recommended his work to the attention of the learned; and he obtained such a degree of literary reputation, that, in the year 1684, he was appointed, by Charles the Second, master of the Charter-house, with a splendid endowment. Here he employed his first leisure in completing his *Theory*; the second part of which was dedicated to William the Third; and in writing his *Archæologia Philosophica*, "Philosophical Antiquities," a work replete with learning, and abounding with judicious observations. It must, however, be confessed, that Burnet's partiality to his theory led him to find in the ancient theogonies, and in the physical doctrine of the ancient philosophers, things which others have not discovered. His singular opinions concerning the origin of the world, the fall, the deluge, and other subjects, brought upon him the charge of heresy, and involved him in troublesome controversies. He lived to the age of eighty-five. Before his death he committed to the flames all the manuscripts which he had drawn up for the press, except two

³ *Acta Phil.* vol. iii. p. 434.

treates, *De Statu Mortuorum et Resurgentium*, "On the State of the Dead, and of the Resurrection," and *De Fide et Officiis Christianorum*, "On the Faith and Duties of Christians," of which only a few copies were at first printed for the use of his friends.

The Mosaic cosmogony Burnet thus explains. Between the beginning and end of the world he supposes several intermediate periods, in which he conceives that nature undergoes various changes. Those which respect this terraqueous globe, he believes to have been recorded in the sacred Scriptures. From these, compared with profane history, he attempts to prove, that the primeval earth, as it rose out of chaos, was of a different form and structure from the present, and was such that from its dissolution would naturally arise an universal deluge. Such a change in the state of the globe he infers from the general aspect of its surface in the present day; and he argues, that since it is the nature of fluids to form a smooth surface, the earth, which was at first a chaotic mass in a fluid state, as it gradually became solid by the exhalation of the lighter particles of air and water, would still retain its regular superficies, so that the new earth would resemble an egg. The earth, in this paradisaical state, he supposes to be capable of sending forth its vegetable productions without rain, and to enjoy a perpetually serene and cloudless atmosphere. In process of time, he conceived that the surface of the earth, by the continual action of the rays of the sun, would become so parched, as to occasion vast fissures, through which the waters of the great abyss, contained within the bowels of the earth, would be sent forth by means of elastic vapours, expanded by heat, and acting with irresistible force upon their surface; whence a universal deluge would ensue, and in the violent concussion, lofty mountains, craggy rocks, and other varieties in the external form of the earth, would appear. Our Theorist also conjectures, that the earth, in its original state, owed its universal spring to the coincidence of the plane of the ecliptic with that of the equator; and supposes that, at the deluge, the pole of the ecliptic changed its position, and became oblique to the plane of the equator. From similar causes he conceives, that the final conflagration will be

produced. This theory is well imagined, supported with much erudition, and described with great elegance of diction: but it can only be considered as an ingenious fiction, which rests upon no other foundation than mere conjecture. *Whiston*,⁸ *Cheverius*,⁹ and others, have also spent the ground of the Mosaic cosmogony, framed theories of the earth: but these philosophical summoses have contributed little towards the improvement of knowledge. *H*

Another writer who claims a place among the Scriptural Philosophers is *Joannes Amos Comenius*,¹⁰ a native of Moravia, born in the year 1592, the author of a celebrated and useful grammatical work, entitled *Jana Linguarum*, "The Porch of Languages." His Protestant principles (for he was a minister of the reformed church, first in his native country, and afterwards in Poland), led him to inquire freely into the grounds of opinions both philosophical and theological; and he soon discovered the futility of the Platonistic philosophy, and resolved, if possible, to substitute something better in its stead. Taking sense, reason, and Scripture for his guides, he framed a system of physics which he entitled, *Synopsis Physica ad Lumen divinum formata*, "A Synopsis of Physics reformed according to Divine Light." Comenius supposes three principles of nature—matter, spirit, and light; the first a dark, inactive, corporeal substance, which receives forms; the second, the subtle, living, invisible substance, which animates material bodies; the third, a middle substance between the two former, lucid, visible, moveable, capable of penetrating matter, which is the instrument by which spirit acts upon matter, and which performs its office by means of motion, agitation, or vibration. Of these three principles he conceived all created beings to be composed. This doctrine he attempts to derive from the Mosaic history of the creation; but the Scholastic fictions which men of this cast ascribe to Moses, Moses himself would probably never have owned.

The track was pursued by *Joannes Beyer*,¹¹ a Hungarian divine, who flourished about the middle of the last century.

⁸ A new Theory of the Earth, Lond. 1696.

⁹ Geologia. Hamb. 1700. 4to.

¹⁰ Method. Polyh. t. ii. l. ii. p. 1. d. 9.

These men, neither contented with the natural light of human reason, nor with the simple doctrines of Scripture understood in their literal sense, have recourse to an internal supernatural light, superior to all other illuminations, from which they profess to derive a mysterious and Divine philosophy, manifested only to the chosen favourites of heaven. They boast that, by means of this celestial light, they are not only admitted to the intimate knowledge of God, and of all Divine truth, but have access to the most sublime secrets of nature. They ascribe it to the singular manifestation of Divine benevolence, that they are able to make such a use of the element of fire, in the chemical art, as enables them to discover the essential principles of bodies, and to disclose stupendous mysteries in the physical world. They even pretend to an acquaintance with those celestial beings which form the medium of intercourse between God and man, and to a power of obtaining from them, by the aid of magic, astrology, and other similar arts, various kinds of information and assistance. This they affirm to be the ancient secret wisdom, first revealed to the Jews under the name of the Cabbala, and transmitted by tradition to posterity. Philosophers of this class have no common system; but every one follows the impulse of his own imagination, and constructs an edifice of fanaticism for himself. The only things in which they are agreed is, to abandon human reason, and pretend to Divine illumination. The reader will easily perceive, that it must be a difficult task to decipher the systems of such philosophers, and will not be disappointed if he find us unable to illuminate this region of obscurity. In pursuit of our plan, we shall enumerate a few of the principal Theosophists.

Many traces of the spirit of Theosophism may be found through the whole history of philosophy; in which nothing is more frequent, than fanatical and hypocritical pretensions to Divine illumination.

Gonsales de Salas Dias, *Parad. de duplice viventium terræ*, Lond. 1650. Abyssinian Philosophy confuted, Lond. 1697. Keil's Examination of Burnet's Theory, Ox. 1698. Whitby's Defence of the Mosaic History of the Creation, Lond. 1705. Barini *Mundus nascens*, Traj. 1686. *Moyse's illust.* Amst. 1707. *Rapagneti Compend. Phys.* Thesaur. Phys. Comen. Berolin. 1702.

Among moderns, the first name which appears with distinction in this class of philosophers is *Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Paracelsus*,¹ a man of a strange and paradoxical genius. He was born at Einsiedlen, near Zurich, in the year 1493. His family name, which was Bombastus, he afterwards changed, after the custom of the age, into Paracelsus. He was instructed by his father, who was a physician, in languages and medicine. So earnestly desirous was he of penetrating into the mysteries of nature, that, neglecting books, he undertook long and hazardous journeys through Germany, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Hungary, and Muscovy, and probably several parts of Asia and Africa. He not only visited literary and learned men, but frequented the workshops of mechanics, descended into mines, and thought no place mean or hazardous, if it afforded him an opportunity of increasing his knowledge of nature. He consulted all persons who pretended to be possessed of any secret art, particularly such as were skilled in metallurgy. Being in this manner a self-taught philosopher and physician, he despised the medical writings of the ancients, and boasted that the whole contents of his library would not amount to six folios. Rejecting the tedious method of the Galenic school, Paracelsus had recourse to new and secret medicines produced from metallic substances by the chemical art. And his bold empirical practice was in many cases attended with such wonderful success, that he rose to the summit of popular fame, and even obtained the medical chair in the city of Basil. Among other nostrums, he administered a medicine, to which he gave the name of Azoth, which he boasted was the philosopher's stone, the medical panacea, and which his disciples extol as the Tincture of Life, given through the Divine favour to man in these last days. His irregular practice, and the virulence with which he censured the ignorance and indolence of other physicians, created him many enemies. The rewards which he received for the cures he performed, were by no means adequate to the expectations of his vanity and ambition. After meeting with many disappointments and mortifications,

¹ Conf. Script. Adami VII. Med. p. 281, 195, 321. ² Conf. de Med. Herm. l. ii. p. 338. Arnold, H. E. p. ii. p. 308. p. 18.

an incident occurred which determined him to leave Basil. A wealthy canon of Litchfield, who happened to fall sick at Basil, offered Paracelsus a hundred florins to cure his disease. This Paracelsus easily effected with three pills of his *Laudanum*, one of his most powerful medicines. The canon, restored to health so soon, and, as appeared to him, by such slight means, refused to stand to his engagement. Paracelsus brought the matter before the magistrate, who decreed him only the usual fee. Inflamed with violent indignation at the contempt which was, by this decision, thrown upon his art, after inveighing bitterly against the canon, the magistrate, and the whole city, he left Basil, and withdrew into Alsace, whither his medical fame and success followed him. After two years, during which time he practised medicine in the principal families of the country, about the year 1530, he removed into Switzerland, where he conversed with Bullenger and other divines. From this time, he seems for many years to have roved through various parts of Germany and Bohemia. At last, in the year 1541, he finished his days in the hospital of St. Sebastian, in Salzburg.

Different and even contradictory judgments have been formed by the learned concerning Paracelsus. His admirers and followers have celebrated him as a perfect master of all philosophical and medical mysteries. Some, on account of the reformation which he produced in medicine, have called him the Medical Luther. Many have maintained, as indeed he himself boasted, that he was possessed of the grand secret of converting inferior metals into gold. On the contrary, others have charged his whole medical practice with ignorance, imposture, and impudence. J. Crato, in an epistle to Zwinger, attests, that in Bohemia his medicines, even when they performed an apparent cure, left his patients in such a state, that they soon after died of palsies or epilepsies. Erastus, who was for two years one of his pupils, wrote an entire book to detect his impostures. He is said to have been not only unacquainted with the Greek language, but so bad a Latin scholar, that he dared not speak a word of Latin in the presence of learned men. It is even asserted, that he was so imperfect a master of his vernacular tongue, that he

was obliged to have his German writings corrected by another hand. His adversaries also charge him with the most contemptible arrogance, the most vulgar audacity, the grossest intemperance, and the most detestable impurity. The truth seems to be, that Paracelsus's merit chiefly consisted in improving the art of chemistry, and in inventing, or bringing to light, several chemical medicines, which to this day hold their place in the *Pharmacopœia*. Without either learning or urbanity, or even decency of manners, by the mere help of physical knowledge and the chemical arts, he obtained an uncommon share of medical fame; and to support his credit with the ignorant, he pretended to an intercourse with invisible spirits, and to Divine illuminations.

Paracelsus wrote, or rather dictated to his amanuensis, many treatises; but they are so entirely void of elegance, so unmethodical and obscure, that one may almost credit the assertion of his chemical assistant, Oponinus, that he dictated most of his books in the night, when he was intoxicated. They treat of an immense variety of subjects, medical, magical, and philosophical. His *Philosophia Sagax*, "Subtle Philosophy," is a most obscure and confused treatise on astrology, necromancy, chiromancy, physiognomy, and other divining arts, calculated for no other purpose than to promote vulgar superstition. Several of his pieces treat of philosophical subjects, such as "The Production and Fruit of the Four Elements;" "The Secrets of Nature, their Origin, Causes, Character, and Properties," and the like; but they are such a confused mass of words, that it would be an Herculean labour to draw out from them any thing which would have the least appearance of a consistent philosophical system.²

The chemical or Paracelsic school produced many eminent men, whose memoirs rather belong to the history of medicine than of philosophy. Many of these took great pains to digest the incoherent dogmas of their master into a methodical system. A summary of this doctrine may be seen in the preface to the *Basiliæ Chymica*, of

² Sennert. de Consensu Chem. et Galen. c. 3. Severini Idea Medic. Phil. Basil. 1671. 4to. Naud. Apol. p. 259. Morhof. Polyb. t. II. l. II. p. 121. 16.

Crellius; which, after all, is nothing better than a mere jargon of words, with which it is wholly unnecessary to trouble the reader.

What Paracelsus was in the sixteenth century, Robert Fludd,³ an English physician, attempted to become in the seventeenth. He was born in the year 1574, at Milgate, in Kent, and became a student in the University of Oxford in 1591. After he had finished his studies, he spent six years in travelling, in order to observe and collect what was curious in nature, mysterious in the arts, or profound in science. Returning to England, he was admitted into the College of Physicians in London, where he obtained great admiration for his singular piety, and the profundity of his chemical, philosophical, and theological knowledge. After a long course of extensive practice he died, in the year 1637.

So peculiar was this philosopher's turn of mind, that there was nothing which ancient or modern times could afford, under the notion of occult wisdom, which he did not eagerly gather into his magazine of science. All the mysterious and incomprehensible dreams of the Cabalists and Paracelsians, he compounded into a new mass of absurdity. In hopes of improving the medical and chemical arts, he devised a new system of physics, loaded with wonderful hypotheses and mystical fictions. He supposed two Universal Principles—the Northern, or condensing power, and the Southern, or rarefying power. Over these he placed innumerable intelligences and genies, and called together whole troops of spirits from the four winds, to whom he committed the charge of diseases. He applied his thermometer to discover the harmony between the macrocosm and the microcosm, or the world of nature and of man; he introduced many marvellous fictions into natural philosophy and medicine; he attempted to explain the Mosaic cosmogony, in a work entitled *Philosophia Mosaica*, wherein he speaks of three first principles, *darkness*, as the first matter; *water*, as the second matter; and the *Divine light*, as the most central essence, creating, informing, vivifying all things; of secondary principles, two

³ Wood Hist. Ant. Ox. I. ii. p. 390. Athen. Ox. p. 610. Cassell's Exam. Phil. Fluddians.

active, cold and heat; and two passive, moisture and dryness; and describes the whole mystery of production and corruption, of regeneration and resurrection, with such vague conceptions and obscure language, as leaves the subject involved in impenetrable darkness. Some of his ideas, such as they were, appeared to have been borrowed from the Cabbalists and Alexandrian Platonists. The reader will easily judge what kind of light may be expected from the writings of Robert Fludd, when he is informed that he ascribes the magnetic virtue to the irradiation of angels. His philosophical works are, *Utriusque Cosmi Historia; Veritatis Proscenium; Monochordium Mundi Symphonicum; Clavis Philosophiæ et Alogymis; Meteorologia Cosmica*, &c. His extravagances were reprobated by several writers, particularly Kepler and Merseus. In reply he wrote an allegoric piece, under the title of "The Contest of Wisdom with Folly." Merseus, who did not choose to continue the controversy, engaged Glassendi to chastise him, in his *Examen Philosophiæ Fluddianæ*, "Examination of the Fluddian Philosophy;" a work which should be read by those who wish to form an accurate judgment of Fludd and other Theosophists.

One of the most dazzling luminaries in the constellation of Theosophists was Jacob Boehmen,⁴ a famous German philosopher, born near Gorlitz, in Upper Lusatia, in the year 1575. He was brought up a shoemaker, and at twenty years of age married a butcher's daughter, with whom he lived happily thirty years. Though he never entirely forsook his occupation, his singular genius soon carried him *ultra crepidam*, "beyond his last." The theological controversies which were at this time spreading through Germany, made their way among the lowest classes of the people; and Boehmen, much disturbed in his mind upon many articles of faith, prayed earnestly for Divine Illumination. The consequence, according to his own account, was, that, rapt beyond himself for seven days together, he experienced a sacred sabbatic silence, and was admitted to the intuitive vision of God. Soon after

⁴ Frankenberg. Vit. Boehm. Sagittar. Intr. in H. E. c. 133. § 19. p. 699. Weissen. Hist. E. t. ii. p. 1234. Hist. J. Boehm. Hamb. 1698. Adam. de Vit. B. Calo. Witteberg. 1716.

wards he had a second ecstasy, in which, as he relates, whilst he was observing the rays which were reflected from a bright pewter vessel, he found himself encompassed surrounded with celestial irradiations; his spirit was carried to the inmost world of nature, and enabled from the external forms, lineaments, and colours of bodies to penetrate into the recess of their essences. In a third vision of the same kind, other still more sublime mysteries were revealed to him, concerning the origin of nature, and the formation of all things, and even concerning Divine principles and intelligent natures. These wonderful communications, in the year 1612, Boehmen committed to writing, and produced his first treatise, entitled *Aurora*, of which, however, the principles, the ideas, and the language are so new and mysterious, that we find it wholly impracticable to attempt an abridgment. Indeed the author himself declares these mysteries incomprehensible to flesh and blood; and says, that though the words be read, their meaning will be concealed, till the reader has by prayer obtained illumination from that heavenly spirit which is in God, and in all nature, and from which all things proceed.

The *Aurora* falling into the hands of the minister of Görlitz, he severely reprimanded the author from the pulpit, and procured an order from the senate of the city, forbidding the work, in which Boehmen was requisited to discontinue his attempts to enlighten the world by his writings. Boehmen paid so much regard to this order, which must be confessed to have been as injudicious as it was oppressive, as to refrain from writing for several years. His projected work, however, found its way to the press at Amsterdam in the year 1619; and the author was encouraged by this circumstance to resume his pen, and from that time sent forth frequent publications. It is said, but upon uncertain authority, that he was summoned to the supreme ecclesiastical court at Dresden, and there underwent an examination before a body of theologians, in which he pleaded his cause so successfully, that he was dismissed without censure. Boehmen died in the communion of the Lutheran church, in the year 1622.

It will be easily perceived, from the particulars, which

have been related, that, in Jacob Boehme, a warm imagination, united with a gloomy temper, and unrestrained by solid judgment, produced that kind of enthusiasm, which in its paroxysms disturbs the natural faculties of perception and understanding, and produces a preternatural agitation of the nervous system, during which the mind is filled with wild and wonderful conceptions, which pass for visions and revelations. Every page of his writings, and even the hieroglyphic figures prefixed to his works, speak a disordered imagination, and it is in vain to attempt to derive his Theosophics from any other source; unless indeed we were inclined to believe the account which he gives of himself, when, boasting that he was neither indebted to human learning, nor was to be ranked among ordinary philosophers, he says, that he wrote, "Not from an external view of nature, but from the dictates of the Spirit; and that what he delivered concerning the nature of things, and concerning the works and creatures of God, had been laid open before his mind by God himself." The conceptions of this enthusiast, in themselves sufficiently obscure, are often rendered still more so by being clothed under allegorical symbols derived from the chemical art. As he frequently uses the same terms with Paracelsus, it is probable that he was conversant with his writings; but he certainly followed no other guide than his own egocentric genius and enthusiastic imagination: and every attempt which has been made by his followers to explain and illustrate his system, has been only raising a fresh *ignis fatuus* to lead the bewildered traveller still farther astray.

We honestly confess it to be wholly beyond our power to give any summary of the Boehmian system. This Mysticism makes God the essence of essences, and supposes a long series of spiritual natures, and even matter itself, to have flowed from the fountain of the Divine Nature. His language, upon these subjects, nearly resembles that of the Jewish Cabala. The whole Divine Trinity, says he, sending forth bodily forms, produces an image of itself, *velut deus quendam parvum*, "as a God in miniature." If any one nath the heavens, the earth, the stars, the elements, and whatever is beneath or above the heavens,

de henja names the whole Deity, who by a power proceeding from himself, thus makes his own essence corporeal. The elements of Boehmen's theosophy may be read in his *Aurora*, and in his treatise *De tribus divine Essentie Principiis*; "On the Three Principles of the Divine Essence." That Jacob Boehmen had many followers, will not be thought surprising, by those who have observed the universal propensity of weak and vulgar minds to be delighted with whatever is mysterious and marvellous, especially when it is clothed in obscure and allegorical language.⁵

A more scientific Theosophist than Jacob Boehmen, we find in *Jahn Baptista Van Helmont*,⁶ a celebrated physician, born at Brussels in 1577. He made such early proficiency in the studies proper to his profession, that at seventeen years of age, he was appointed lecturer in surgery in the academy of Louvain. But he soon discovered, that he had undertaken this office inconsiderately, and had presumed to teach what he himself did not understand. He found that, though he had read many books, and made large common-place collections, he had not yet acquired true and substantial knowledge; and he lamented that credulous and simple youth are so often deceived by the arrogant pretensions of professors. He now applied, with unwearied industry to the study of mathematics, geometry, logic, and algebraic, and of astronomy. But even in these branches of science he did not find the satisfaction he expected. Still complaining of his ignorance, he refused the title of master of arts, and said, that he had hitherto learned no single art in reality, but in appearance only. Under all this seeming modesty, Van Helmont concealed a fastidious contempt of all knowledge but his own, and even of all the learning which had hitherto appeared in the world, and a fond conceit that he was raised up by God to overturn former systems, and to introduce a new method of philosophizing. Induced, as he relates,

⁵ Omnia enim stolidi magis admirantur amantque.

Inversis quæ sub verbis latitantia cernunt.

⁶ Confess. t. i. Op. p. 9. Arnold. H. E. p. iii. c. 8. Reiman. Hist. Germ. Lit. v. iii. p. 437. Blount. Cens. p. 955. Witten. Mem. Med. p. 125. Seder Olam. Amst. 1697.

by the pious writings of Thomas à Kempis, to pray to God that he would enable him to love and pursue the truth. He was instructed by a dream to renounce all Pagan philosophy, and particularly Stoicism, to which he had been inclined, and to wait for Divine illumination. Dissatisfied with the knowledge of the nature and virtues of plants which he derived from the writings of Matthiolas and Dioscorides; and with the principles of medicine which he found in Galen or Avicenna, he concluded that medical knowledge was not to be obtained from the writings of men, or from human industry. He had again recourse to prayers, and was again admonished by a dream to give himself up to the pursuit of Divine wisdom. About this time he learned, from an illiterate chemist, the practical operations of the chemical art, and devoted himself with great zeal and perseverance to this pursuit, in hopes of finding in a chemical laboratory that knowledge which he had in vain sought for from books. The medical skill which he by this means acquired, he entirely employed in the service of the poor. He administered medicines gratis for several years, and obtained a high reputation both for humanity and medical skill. A cold, which he caught in visiting a poor patient in the night, put an end to his life, in the sixty-seventh year of his age.

Van Helmont certainly possessed ready talents, read much, and by the help of experiment improved both the chemical and medical art; but his vanity led him into empirical pretensions. He boasted that he was possessed of a fluid, which he called Alcahest, or pure salt, which was the first material principle in nature, and was capable of penetrating into bodies, and producing an entire separation and transmutation of their component parts. But this wonderful fluid was never shewn to any person whatever, not even to his son, who also practised chemistry. The contempt which this philosopher entertained for all former systems, led him to frame one of his own, which was a strange compound of theological, medical, and philosophical paradoxes, and in which Theosophic mysticism is united with Scholastic subtleties. Although he professes to erect the structure of his system upon the foundation of experiment, it is in truth nothing more than a

baseless fabric, raised in dreams and portraits by a hurried and disordered imagination. Ambitious of novelty, Van Helmont framed abstractions which never existed but in his own feverish brain, and, after giving these imaginary entities barbarous names, boasted of them as wonderful inventions. His writings, if we except a few things in practical chemistry and medicine, are, in fact, wholly destitute of that kind of information, which would satisfy a rational inquirer after truth, or an accurate investigator of nature.

The footsteps of this philosopher were closely followed by his son, *Francis Helmont*,⁷ who industriously increased the stock of philosophical fictions which he inherited from his father, by incorporating with them the dreams of the Jewish Cabala. His "Paradoxical Dissertations," are a mass of philosophical, medical, and theological paradoxes, scarcely to be paralleled in the history of literature.

The most elegant and philosophical of all the Theosophists was *Peter Porret*,⁸ born at Metz, in 1646, and educated in the academy of Basil. Being interrupted in his attendance upon the schools by ill health, he employed himself, during a long confinement, in the study of the Cartesian philosophy. In the year 1668, he became a student in the University of Heidelberg, in order to qualify himself for the clerical profession; and in 1672, he assumed the character of an ecclesiastic in the principality of Deux Ponts. Here, after a severe illness, he wrote his *Cogitationes Rationales de Deo, Anima, et Malo*, "Rational Thoughts concerning God, the Soul, and Evil," in which he for the most part followed the principles of Des. Cartes; a work which engaged much attention among philosophers, and which he afterwards defended against the censures of Bayle. The public tumults obliged him to leave his clerical career, and he withdrew to Holland, and afterwards to Hamburg, where he met the celebrated French mystic, *Madame Bossuignon*, and was so captivated with her opinions, that he became her zealous disciple. Converted from a Cartesian philosopher into a mystical divine, he determined to erect

⁷ Stoll. Intr. in Hist. Lit. p. i. c. 2, § 8.

⁸ Præf. in Opusc. posth. Arnold. Hist. Ecc. p. iii. p. 162. Benthem. Stat. Eccl. et Schol. Holl. p. ii. p. 426. Nicéron. Mem. de Lit. t. iv. Stoll. Hist. Lit. p. ii. c. 2, § 7.

forward to seek for that illumination from Divine contemplation and prayer, which he could not obtain by the exertion of his rational faculties. From this time Porret became a violent enemy to the Cartesian philosophy, and took great pains to detect its errors and defects. At the same time, fascinated with Bourignonian mysticism, he rejected the light of reason as useless and dangerous, and inveighed against every kind of philosophy which was not the effect of Divine illuminations. Towards the close of his life, Porret settled at Rheinsburg, in Holland, and employed the remainder of his days in writing mystical books. He died in the year 1719. His treatises *De Œconomia Divina*, "On the Divine Economy;" and *De Eruditione Triphlet*, "On three Kinds of Learning;" and the last edition of his *Cognitiones Rationales*, though in a great measure free from that obscurity which distinguishes the writings of the Theosophists already mentioned, certainly rank him among the class of Mystics. Some of his mystical notions, as they may be gathered from the preliminary dissertation prefixed to his works,* are as follow:

"It hath pleased God, in order that he may enjoy a vivid and delightful contemplation of himself, beyond that solitude which belongs to the Divine Essence, to create external beings in whom he may produce an image of himself. The essence of the human mind is Thought, capable and desirous of light, and joyful complacence; the properties in which it bears a resemblance of the Divine Essence. Nothing is more intimate or essential to the mind, than this desire, by which it is borne always towards the true and infinite good. In order to satisfy this desire, the illumination of faith is necessary; by means of which the mind, conscious of its weakness and impotence, disclaims all the notions of human reason; and directs itself towards God with an intense and ineffable ardour, till, by the silent contemplation of him, it is filled with tranquillizing light and joyful complacence; although, whilst oppressed with the load of mortality, it cannot behold his unveiled face. From this Divine illumination proceeds the most pacific serenity of mind, the most ardent love of God, and the most intimate union with him.

Can there be any doubt concerning the propriety of ranking among fanatics, writers who renounce the light of reason, and seek all wisdom and happiness in submitting the mind, in silence and tranquillity, to the impressions of Divine illumination?

To the class of Theosophists has been commonly referred the entire society of *Rosacrusians*,¹⁰ which, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, made so much noise in the ecclesiastical and literary world. The history of this society, which is attended with some obscurity, seems to be as follows: its origin is referred to a certain German, whose name was Rosenkreutz, who, in the fourteenth century, visited the Holy Sepulchre, and, in travelling through Asia and Africa, made himself acquainted with many oriental secrets; and who, after his return, instituted a small fraternity, to which he communicated the mysteries he had learned, under an oath of inviolable secrecy. This society remained concealed till the beginning of the seventeenth century, when two books were published, the one entitled, *Fama Fraternitatis laudabilis Ordinis Rosacrusis*, "The Report of the laudable Fraternity of Rosacrusians;" the other, *Confessio Fraternitatis*,¹¹ "The Confession of the Fraternity." In these books the world was informed, that this fraternity was enabled, by Divine revelation, to explain the most important secrets both of nature and grace; that they were appointed to correct the errors of the learned world, particularly in philosophy and medicine; that they were possessed of the philosopher's stone, and understood both the art of transmuting metals, and of prolonging human life; and, in fine, that by their means the golden age would return. As soon as these grand secrets were divulged, the whole tribe of the Paracelsists, Theosophists, and Chemists, flocked to the Rosacrusian standard, and every new and unheard-of mystery was referred to this fraternity. It is impossible to relate how much noise this wonderful discovery made, or what different opinions were formed concerning it. After all, though the laws and statutes of the

¹⁰ Arnold, *Hist. Eccl.* P. ii. c. 18. p. 613. Sec. 17. p. 58. Struy, *Intr. in Hist. Lit.* c. 9. § 20. p. 466. *Biblioth. Phil.* c. 2. § 13. Colberg. Christ. Plat. *Hermet.* p. i. c. 6. Serpill. *Epitaph. Theol.* p. 12. Val. Andread. *Trinit. Babel*, c. 20. *Phoen.* 1814. d. 57.

society had appeared, no one could tell where the society itself was to be found, or who really belonged to it. It was imagined by some sagacious observers, that a certain important meaning was concealed under the story of the Rosacrusian fraternity, though they were wholly unable to say what it was. One conjectured that some chemical mystery lay hid behind the allegorical tale; another supposed that it foretold some great ecclesiastical revolution. At last, Michael Breler,¹² in the year 1620, had the courage publicly to declare, that he certainly knew the whole story to have been the contrivance of some ingenious persons, who chose to amuse themselves by imposing upon the public credulity. This declaration raised a general suspicion against the whole story; and, as no one undertook to contradict it, this wonderful society daily vanished, and the rumours, which had been spread concerning it, ceased. The whole was probably a contrivance to ridicule the pretenders to secret wisdom and wonderful power, particularly the chemists, who boasted that they were possessed of the philosopher's stone. It has been conjectured, and the satirical turn of his writings, and several particular passages in his works, favour the conjecture, that this farce was invented and performed, in part at least, by John Valentine Andrea, a divine of Wartenburg.

The preceding detail may suffice to shew in what light the sect of the Theosophists is to be considered. Although the eccentricities of this sect are too various to be reduced into a regular system, they are all to be traced back to one common source, the renunciation of human reason. The whole dependance of these philosophers is upon internal inspiration, in which, whilst the intellect remains quiescent and passive, they wait, in sacred stillness and silence of the soul, for Divine illuminations; and whatever in these profound reveries is suggested to them by a heated imagination, they receive as Divine instruction. They do not indeed openly condemn the authority of the sacred writings; but they reject their natural meaning, and, by the help of childish allegories, convert the words of Scripture to whatever signification they please. With no other guide in the search of truth than their own disturbed

¹² In *Mysterio Iniquitatis Pseudo-Evang.* c. iii. p. 190. *Alether*, p. 329.

fancied; they admit the wildest dogmas of a feverish brain as sacred truths, and obtrude them upon the world with insufferable arrogance, as oracular decisions not to be controverted.

These enthusiasts seem to be agreed in acknowledging, that all things flow from God, and will return to him, and particularly, that this is the case with the human soul, which must derive its chief felicity from the contemplation of God; and that Divine illumination is only to be expected in that submissive state of the soul, in which it is deprived of all activity, and remains the silent subject of Divine impressions. They have, moreover, fancied, that God has not only enstamped his image upon man, but upon all visible objects; and that this image of God being discovered by certain signs, the hidden nature of things may be understood, the influence of the superior world upon the inferior may be known, and great and wonderful effects may be produced. They have imagined, that, by the help of the arts of astrology and chemistry, the mysteries of nature may be so far laid open, that a universal remedy for diseases, and a method of converting inferior metals into gold, or the philosopher's stone, might be discovered.

Little need be said to prove, that the system of Theosophism is founded in delusion, and that it is productive of mischief both to philosophy and religion. These supposed illuminations are to be ascribed either to fanaticism or to imposture. The fastidious contempt, with which these pretenders to Divine wisdom have treated those, who are contented to follow the plain dictates of common sense, and the simple doctrine of the Scriptures, has unquestionably imposed upon the credulous vulgar, and produced an indifference to rational inquiry, which has obstructed the progress of knowledge. And their example has encouraged others to traduce philosophy and theology in general, by representing them as resting upon no better foundation, than enthusiasm and absurdity. It is to be charitably presumed, that these deluded visionaries have not been themselves aware of the injury which they have been doing to the interests of science and religion. Nevertheless, it must be regretted, both on their own account, and on account of the multitudes they have misled, that whilst

they have thought themselves following a higher and nobler path; they have been led astray by various methods, and have been misled by various errors.

But, when we consider the progress of philosophy, we find that it has been the result of a long and arduous struggle, and that it has been the work of many generations.

CHAP. IV. OF THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY.

IN enumerating the deviations from the true method of philosophizing, which a dislike of Sectarian philosophy has produced, we must not omit to mention a class of men, who, though they are not themselves philosophers, have had some effect upon the state of philosophy—those who have appeared as its professed adversaries. Every period in the history of philosophy has produced men of this description. The wise men of Greece were ridiculed by Damon, a Cyrenian. Socrates was persecuted by the Athenians. Philosophy itself was proscribed in the Roman republic, and by several of the Roman emperors; and its records have more than once fallen a sacrifice to the bigotry of Mahometan, and even of Christian princes. Wits have ridiculed philosophers, and priests have condemned them. It is no wonder, then, that philosophy has experienced a similar fate in modern times.

The attacks which have been made upon philosophy since the revival of letters have been of different kinds; some open and direct, some oblique and concealed. Among its indirect opponents may be reckoned those advocates for revelation, who have maintained that its doctrines cannot be reconciled with the dictates of human reason, and those enthusiasts, who have relinquished the use of reason, and

¹ Vidend. Erastus contra Paracelsum. Crollii Basilica Chymica. Oporini Ep. ad Wier. de Moribus Præceptoris. Clerici Hist. Med. p. 794. 802. Borrich. de Chymia. c. 6. Budd. Isag. p. i. p. 255. Arnold. Hist. Ecc. p. ii. l. 17. Morhoff. Polyh. t. ii. l. ii. p. i. c. 10. 15. Wersendorf. Disp. de Fanaticis Silesiorum. Rapin Reflexions sur la Philosophie, p. 54. Hinckelman. Detect. fœdum. Boehm. De Visch. Bibl. Ord. Gest. p. 187. Stolkopvii Animadv. in Poiret. Felleri Monument. inedit. Fluddi Tract. Apolog. pro Soc. de Rosea Cruce, 1617. Thomas Præf. ad Poiret de Erudit. triplici. Conring. de Hermet. Egypt. et Paracels. Le Compté de Gabalis. Croll. Amphitheatrum Sapientie Eternæ, Magd. 1608.

abandoned themselves to the extravagances of fanaticism. Of a direct attack upon philosophy, we shall give one example, in the controversy which happened in the University of Helmstadt, towards the close of the sixteenth century.

Daniel Hoffman,¹ born in 1538, at Hall, in Saxony, and professor, first of logic and ethics, and afterwards of theology, in the University of Helmstadt, had long distinguished himself as a keen and angry disputant. In his time disputes ran high concerning the ubiquity of the human nature of Christ, which was admitted by the more orthodox theologians, but denied by the Brunswick divines, who contented themselves with maintaining, that the man Jesus Christ could be present wherever he pleased. The aid of the Scholastic philosophy being called in by both parties, to decide this controversy, Hoffman, whether through pique or vanity it is not easy to determine, took this occasion to erect his standard against philosophy itself. In an academical disputation, he maintained, that the light of reason, even as it appears in the writings of Plato and Aristotle, is adverse to religion; and that the more the human understanding is cultivated by philosophical study, the more perfectly is the enemy supplied with the weapons of defence. The partiality which at this time universally prevailed in favour of the Aristotelian philosophy, was such, that an opinion of this kind could not be advanced publicly without exciting general dissatisfaction and alarm. A numerous band of professors, though they differed in opinion among themselves, united to take up arms against the common enemy. At the head of this body, was John Cassel; whence the advocates for philosophy were called the Casselian Party. They at first challenged Hoffman to a private conference, in expectation of leading him to a sounder judgment concerning philosophy; but their hopes were frustrated. Hoffman, persuaded that interest and envy had armed the philosophers against him, in his reply to his opponents, inveighed with great bitterness against philosophers, and acknowledged, that he meant to oppose not only the abuse of philosophy, but the most prudent and

¹ Elsyich, de Fortun. Arist. in Acad. Prot. § 27. Arnold. Hist. Eccl. p. ii. iii. Bayle. Reimann. Hist. Lit. Germ. p. iv. p. 96.

legitimate use of it, as necessarily destructive of theology. This extravagant assertion, accompanied with many contumacious censures of philosophers, produced reciprocal resentment; and Albert Graver published a book *De Unitate Veritate*, which maintained "the Simplicity of Truth;" a doctrine from which the Casselian party were called Simplificists; whilst the followers of Hoffman (for he found means to engage several persons, particularly among the Theosophists, in his interest) opposing this doctrine, were called, on the other hand, Duplicists. John Angel Wardenhagen, a Boehmenite, who possessed some poetical talents, wrote several poems against the philosophers. In short, the disputes ran so high, and produced so much personal abuse, that the court thought it necessary to interpose its authority, and appointed arbitrators to examine the merits of the controversy. The decision was against Hoffman, and he was obliged to make a public recantation of his errors, acknowledging the utility and excellence of philosophy, and declaring that his invectives had been only directed against its abuses. After this defeat, Hoffman retired into a neighbouring monastery; but he was permitted to return to Helmstadt, and open a private school. He died in the year 1611.

Wardenhagen, who had been Hoffman's coadjutor, would not suffer the contest to sleep after the death of its author. His zeal for Boehmean Theosophism impelled him to persist in his invectives against philosophers; and he pressed into his service a hot-headed youth, Weneslaw Schilling, a Trinitarian, who inflamed the quarrel by several virulent publications, one of which was entitled *Visitatio Ecclesie Metaphysicæ*, "A Visitation of the Metaphysical Church." For his scurrilities he was banished from Wittenburg. Wardenhagen withdrew to Holland; and the dispute ended. A dispute which originated in disappointed vanity, and was supported by enthusiasm and malevolence, only deserves to be recorded as a proof of the necessity of philosophy soberly, and of following reason, rather than imagination or passion, in the search after truth.

Yidend. Weisman. Hist. Ecc. t. ii. p. 1170. Michael Syn. Hist. Ecc. l. iii. § 2. Huteri Concordia Concord. c. 52. Melch. Mogner. c. 3.

BOOK X.

OF MODERN ECLECTIC PHILOSOPHY.

CHAP. I.

OF THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF MODERN ECLECTIC PHILOSOPHY.

UPON the revival of letters, many attempts were made to restore and to improve philosophy; but from the preceding narrative it is sufficiently evident, that little was accomplished. The human understanding, long at length however, through the favour of Divine Providence, asserted its native freedom and dignity, and shaken off the yoke of authority. Many independant and exalted geniuses have arisen, who, despising the servile prejudice of yielding implicit deference to the decisions of the ancients, have determined, by the vigorous exertions of their own faculties, to investigate certain and universal principles for themselves, and upon this foundation to frame a system of opinions, which should be truly and properly their own. They have not indeed, disdained to consult the records of ancient wisdom, but they have admitted nothing as true which their reason and judgment have not approved.

From these laudable attempts a species of philosophy has arisen, more pure and excellent than that of any former period, which we shall distinguish by the name of the Modern Eclectic Philosophy; understanding by the term, however, something very different from that species kind of philosophy, which arose in the school of Alexandria, and from that confusion of opinions which some modern writers, by attempting to reconcile Platonism with Stoicism or Peripateticism, and all these with Christianity, have produced. The true Eclectic philosopher, renounc-

ing every prejudice in favour of celebrated names or ancient sects, makes reason his sole guide, and diligently investigates the nature and properties of the objects which come under his observation, that he may from these deduce clear principles, and arrive at certain knowledge. He esteems nothing so disgraceful in philosophy, as *jurare in urbe magistri*, implicitly to acknowledge the authority of a master, and says, with respect to all the different sects and their leaders,

*Tros Rutulusve fuit, nullo discrimine habeo.*¹

It is wholly unnecessary to expatiate upon the superior dignity and usefulness of this method of philosophizing above all others; and it is foreign from our purpose to lay down the principles and rules by which it should be conducted. But it may not be improper, in a few words, to explain the reasons why this method of prosecuting philosophical inquiries, so obvious as well as reasonable, was not sooner adopted.

The history of the restoration of learning will itself suggest one cause of this fact. Those learned men on whom the charge of reforming philosophy, as well as reviving letters, devolved, were chiefly employed in the study of the ancients, and were more desirous of excelling in erudition than of improving science. The Greek philosophy, preserved in those ancient writings which principally engaged their attention, came recommended to them under the seducing form of ancient lore; and they easily persuaded themselves, that it was wholly unnecessary to attempt improvements upon the wisdom of Plato and Aristotle. Occupied in grammatical and critical inquiries, they had neither leisure nor inclination to exercise their talents in original researches into nature. Add to this, that indolence probably prevented some, and ignorance of the true nature of philosophy, and of the value of the dialectic method of philosophizing, hindered others, from attempting new discoveries; whilst the more enterprising geniuses, from whom such improvements might have been expected, such for example as Martin Luther, were

voted to higher pursuits. Philip Melancthon, though possessed of abilities equal to the task, was of too timid a disposition to shake off the Sectarian yoke, and contributed more than became a reformer in religion, to rivet the chains of authority in philosophy. And, among the Roman Catholics, such a blind respect for ancient names was still predominant, and so strong was the attachment to those established forms with which ecclesiastical honours and emoluments were inseparably connected, that philosophical innovations were not to be expected from this quarter. The rigour with which every attempt towards the introduction of new opinions was at this time suppressed by the heads of the Romish church, doubtless confirmed the general prejudice against alterations of every kind, and deterred those, who were capable of penetrating through the surrounding mist of superstition and error, from yielding to the impulse of nature and genius.

These difficulties long retarded the progress of science; but at length certain philosophers of the first order, conscious of internal strength sufficient for the undertaking, ventured to burst the enclosure of authority, and, by the aid of deep reflection and persevering industry, enlarged the boundaries of human knowledge. Clearly perceiving the defects and errors of the several Grecian sects, they deplored the abject state to which the human mind had been reduced by indolence, superstition, and blind submission, and with generous indignation threw off the yoke. The first successful attempt for this purpose was made by that great man, Lord Bacon, who may therefore justly be called the parent of modern Eclectic philosophy. In his *Novum Organum*, a work richly fraught with true and liberal philosophy, his first object was to cast down the idol, which the philosophical world had so long worshipped, and recal their homage to the divinity of truth.

Although some eminent men, who have philosophized after the Eclectic method, have had the vanity to exhibit themselves as the founders of new sects, it is inconsistent with the nature of Eclectic philosophy to admit of Sectarian subdivisions. Instead therefore of attempting, as some writers have done, to divide modern philosophy into distinct schools, we shall content ourselves with a more

simple arrangement, and shall first treat of those philosophers who have, more or less successfully, endeavoured to improve philosophy in general; and secondly, of those who have applied themselves to the improvement of certain branches of philosophy. Of the history and dogmatics of each we shall give such a sketch as the nature of our plan requires, without attempting those details, which it would be impossible to bring within the limits we have assigned to the present work.²

CHAP. II.

OF MODERN ECLECTIC PHILOSOPHERS, WHO HAVE ATTEMPTED TO IMPROVE PHILOSOPHY IN GENERAL.

SECT. I.

Of Jordano Bruno.

THE first person among the moderns who attempted any material innovation in philosophy, was *Jordano Bruno*, born at Nola, in the kingdom of Naples. He flourished at the latter end of the sixteenth century, but the exact time of his birth is unknown. To excellent talents he added a lofty spirit, which rose superior to prejudice, and would admit nothing as true without examination; whence it is easy to conceive, that, in the system of philosophy and theology then taught in the schools of Italy, he met with many things which he could not digest. Fond of retirement and study, he entered into a monastery of Dominicans. But the freedom of his opinions, and the boldness of the censure which he passed upon the irregularities of the fraternity, soon created him enemies, and subjected him to persecutions, which obliged him to quit his order and his country, leaving behind him all his property.

² Vidend. Arnold. Wesenfeld. Diss. iv. de Phil. Sect. et Eclect. Mosheim. Hist. Christ. Recent. Sec. 17. p. 403.

³ Epist. Scipii in Strav. Act. Lit. t. v. p. 64. De Coss. Entretiens, p. 187. Steph. Jordan. Diss. Hist. Lit. de J. Bruno. Bayle.

In the year 1582, he withdrew to Geneva, where his heretical opinions gave offence to Calvin and Beza, and he was soon obliged to provide for his safety by flight. After a short stay at Lyons he came to Paris. Here, his innovating spirit recommended him to the notice of multitudes, who at this time declared open hostilities against the authority of Aristotle. In a public disputation, held in the Royal Academy, in 1586, he defended, three days successively, certain propositions concerning nature and the world, which, together with brief heads of the arguments, he afterwards published in Saxony, under the title of *Acrotismus*,* or “Reasons of the Physical Articles proposed against the Peripatetics at Paris.” The contempt with which Bruno, in the course of these debates, treated Aristotle, exposed him to the resentment of the academic professors, who were zealous advocates for the old system; and he found it expedient to leave the kingdom of France. According to some writers,³ he now visited England, in the train of the French ambassador Castelnau, where he was hospitably received by Sir Philip Sydney and Sir Fulke Greville, and was introduced to Queen Elizabeth. But, though it is certain from his writings that he was in England, he probably made this visit in some other part of his life. For, about the middle of the same year in which he was at Paris, we find him at Wittemberg, a zealous adherent of Luther. In this city he met with a liberal reception, and full permission to propagate his doctrines: but the severity with which he inveighed against Aristotle, the latitude of his opinions in religion as well as philosophy, and the contempt with which he treated the masters of the public schools, excited new jealousies; and complaints were lodged against him before the senate of the university. To escape the disgrace which threatened him, Bruno, after two years’ residence in Wittemberg, left that place, and took refuge in Helmstadt, where the known liberality of the Duke of Brunswick encouraged him to hope for a secure asylum. But, either through the restlessness of his disposition, or through unexpected opposition, he left this place the next year, and went to Frankfort to

* Witteberg. 1586.

• Sciepp. and Bayle.

superior education of his mind, and of the most liberal and generous spirit, he was the victim of the calumnious intrigues of John A. W. But before his design was completed he was obliged, and suddenly, probably from an apprehension of persecution, to quit that city. His next residence (until he was at this time that he visited England) was at Padua, where, with boldness, with which he taught his own doctrines, and intrigued against the court of Rome and the clergy, soon brought him under the censure of the court of inquisition at Venice, as an apostate from the faith; in consequence of which he was conveyed as a prisoner to Rome, and, after two years' confinement, was condemned to the flames. This sentence was executed in the year 1600. A severe fate, which, though it has been ascribed to the impiety of his tenets, was more probably the effect of his desertion from the Roman church, and of his daring attacks upon the majesty of the pontificate.

The character of this philosopher was certainly singular and paradoxical. A luxuriant imagination supplied him with wonderful conceptions, intelligible only to a few, which were never formed into a system. Not possessing that cool and solid judgment, and that habit of patient attention, which are necessary to a thorough investigation of subjects, he frequently embraced trifling and doubtful propositions as certain truths. His ideas were for the most part wild and fantastic, and he indulged himself in a most unbounded liberty of speech. Some of his original conceptions are indeed more luminous and satisfactory, and nearly coincide with the principles of philosophy afterwards received by Des Cartes, Leibnitz, and others. But these sparks of truth are buried in a confused mass of extravagant and trifling dogmas, expressed in a metaphorical and intricate style, and immethodically arranged. In brief, though Bruno was not destitute of a vigorous and original genius, he wanted that good sense and that steady temper, without which no great reformation, either in philosophy or religion, can be effected.

Bruno was a voluminous writer. His most celebrated philosophical pieces are the following: *De Umbris Idearum*, "On Shadows of Ideas;" *De l'Infinito, Universo*,

Par. 1682.

et Mundi,⁴ "Of Infinity, the Universe, and World;" *Spaccio della Bestia trionfante*,⁵ "Dispatches from the Triumphant Beast;" *Oratio valedictoria habita in Academia Wittebergensi*,⁶ "A farewell Oration delivered in the University of Wittemberg;" *De Monade, Numero, et Figura*,⁷ "Of Monad, Number, and Figure;" *Summa Terminorum Metaphysicorum*,⁸ "Summary of Metaphysical Terms." Of these the satirical work, "Dispatches from the Beast triumphant," is the most celebrated.⁹

The extreme scarceness of the writings of this philosopher, and the invincible obscurity of those which have come under our notice, render it impossible for us to give a full and accurate view of his doctrine, or to decide with certainty concerning the kind or degree of impiety which it involved. Thus much, however, may on satisfactory grounds be asserted, that the doctrine of Bruno was not, as Bayle and La Croze maintain, founded on the principles of Spinozism, but on the ancient doctrine of emanation. For, though he acknowledges only one substance in nature, yet it appears from many passages in his writings to have been his opinion, that all things have from eternity flowed from one immense and infinite fountain, an emanative principle, essential to the Divine Nature. From this source he derives his *Minima*, or atoms, of which the visible world is formed. To these he ascribes perception, life, and motion. Besides these, he supposes a distinct principle of combination and union; or a soul of the world, derived from the same fountain, by which the forms of nature are produced and preserved. This intermediate agent, which connects all the other emanations from the eternal fountain, is, in the system of Bruno, Nature. By means of which, out of infinite emanations from the eter-

⁴ Ven. 1584.⁵ Par. 1584.⁶ Witteb. 1588.⁷ Francof. 1591.⁸ Tig. 1595.

⁹ Addison gives a brief account of this work in the Spectator, No. 389, and speaks of the writer as a professed atheist. But, as the plan of the work, given by Addison, is not atheistical, and as it is not probable that he had seen those treatises from which our author drew his abstract of this philosopher's opinions, more regard is due to Brucker's elaborate inquiry into the character and doctrine of Bruno, than to Addison's cursory judgment.

This No. of the Spectator was
written by
John Locke

nal fountain, infinite and eternal worlds are produced; whilst, in truth, only one being exists, which is infinite, immutable, indivisible, good, the uncreated light which pervades all space, and which has within itself one substantial form of all things. This doctrine appears to have been the result of an absurd attempt to unite the Atomic and Emanative systems, in which mathematics, physica, and metaphysics, are injudiciously confounded, and which, on the whole, rather served to perplex than to improve philosophy.¹⁰

SECT. II.

Of Jerom Cardan.

IN the class of modern Eclectic philosophers, however eccentric and unsuccessful in his attempts to reform philosophy, we must reckon *Jerom Cardan*, an Italian physician, born at Pavia, in the year 1501. His father, who was a lawyer by profession, and a man well skilled in secret arts, instructed him very early in the mysteries of numbers, and the precepts of astrology. He also taught him the elements of geometry, and was desirous to have engaged him in the study of jurisprudence. But his inclination strongly prompting him to the medical profession, he entered upon the study of medicine, and obtained the degree of doctor of physic at Padua. To escape the public tumults he retired into the country, where he formed a matrimonial connexion, of which he bitterly complains as the cause of all his subsequent misfortunes. His friends made repeated efforts to obtain him an advantageous establishment, but he was too supercilious and peevish to profit by their kindness. An offer was made him of the honourable post of physician to the king of Denmark, with an annual salary of eight hundred crowns, and a free table, but he refused it, on account of the climate, and the religion of the country. In the year 1552, he was invited into Scotland by the archbishop of St. An-

¹⁰ Vidend. Heumann. Act. Phil. v. iii. p. 432. Leibnitz. Ep. v. iv. p. 37. Huët. Cens. Phil. Cart. c. 8. Morhoff. Polyh. t. ii. l. i. c. 16. § 6. Vogt. Cat. Lib. rar. p. 139.

draw's, and received a large gratuity for his medical services. In the course of this journey he visited England, and was earnestly entreated by Edward, whose nativity he calculated, to remain in his court; but he could not be prevailed upon to stay longer than a few months. On his return into Italy, after residing some years in the academy at Bologna, he removed to Rome; where he was admitted into the college of physicians, with a pension from the pope. Thuanus relates, that he saw Cardan at Rome, a few years before his death, and was surprised to find nothing in him which answered to the high reputation he had obtained. In the year 1576, he finished his days, more like a maniac than a philosopher.¹¹

Cardan was a wonderful compound of wisdom and folly. Through his whole life he practised the art of astrology, and wrote an account of his own fate, under the title of *Explicatio Geniturae*, "A Calculation of Nativity," in which he confidently hazards many predictions, and marks innumerable contradictions in his own character, which he ascribes to the malign influence of the stars. He had so much confidence in this art, that he maintained, that the position of the stars at the birth of our Saviour was such as indicated a wonderful character. His numerous predictions, and the cures which he undertook to perform by secret charms, or by the assistance of invisible spirits, made him pass for a magician with the vulgar, but were in fact only proofs of a mind infatuated by superstition. In the midst of all this weakness, Cardan is universally acknowledged to have been a man of great erudition, and fertile invention, and is celebrated as the author of many new and singular observations in philosophy and medicine. His treatise *De Methodo Medendi*, "On the Practice of Medicine," discovers a mind capable of detecting and renouncing established errors. His book *De Subtilitati et Varietate Rerum*, "On the Subtlety and Variety of Things," shews, that if he could have preserved his judgment free from the influence of a disordered imagination, he was able to have contributed to the improvement

¹¹ Card. de Vita propria. Bayle. Tomassin. Elog. p. 56. Naudæi Judic. de Card. Sevin. Hist. Acad. Rég. Inscript. t. xiii. art. 2. Thuan. Hist. l. xlii. ann. 1576.

of natural philosophy. Of the dogmas of this philosopher, the following are a specimen.

Primary matter, which remains immutably the same, fills every place; whence, without the annihilation of matter, there can be no vacuum. Three principles subsist every where; matter, form, and mind. There are in matter three kinds of motion; the first, from form to element; the second, the reverse of this; the third, the descent of heavy bodies. The elements or passive principles are three; water, earth, and air, for naturally all things are cold, that is, destitute of heat. The agent in nature is celestial heat; the air, being exposed to the action of the solar rays, is perpetually in motion. The moon and all the other heavenly bodies are luminous from themselves. The heavens are animated by an ever active principle, and are therefore never quiescent. Man, having mind as well as soul, is not an animal. The dispositions of men are produced, and all moral affairs are directed, by the influence of the stars. Mind is universally diffused, and though it appears multiplied, is but one; it is extrinsically, and for a time, attached to human bodies, but never perishes.

Innumerable other singular metaphysical and physical notions are to be found in the works of Cardan; and they are accompanied with many experiments and observations on natural *phenomena*. But the whole is thrown together in such a confused mass, as plainly proves, that, though the author's head was replete with ideas, he wanted that sound understanding and cool judgment, without which the most ingenious and original conceptions must prove abortive. He was too fond of mysticism, too credulous, too superstitious, and, in a word, too much of an astrologer, to be a true philosopher. Cardan, therefore, notwithstanding all the variety and apparent originality of his writings, must be ranked among the unsuccessful adventurers in philosophy. His works, which treat of metaphysics, logic, natural philosophy, medicine, mathematics, and morals, were collected by Spon, and published¹² in ten volumes. He was attacked with much acrimony by several

¹² Lugd. 1663.

writers, particularly by J. C. Scaliger, who envied his philosophical reputation and medical success.¹³

SECT. III.

Of Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam.

THAT reformation in philosophy, which had been unsuccessfully attempted by Bruno, Cardan, and others, was happily accomplished by that illustrious English philosopher, Lord Bacon, who did more to detect the sources of former errors and prejudices, and to discover and establish the true method of philosophizing, than the whole body of philosophers which many preceding ages had produced.

Francis Bacon, Baron of Verulam, and Viscount of St. Alban's, was born in London in the year 1560. His father was Sir Nicholas Bacon, lord keeper of the great seal, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. It was the good fortune of Lord Bacon, that he appeared at a time when learning was commonly admired and cultivated among men of rank and fortune, and was even fashionable at court. The singular talents with which nature had endued him, and his early proficiency in learning, recommended him; whilst a boy, to the particular attention of several of the nobility, and introduced him to the notice of the queen. Fond of school learning, that princess more than once amused herself with endeavouring to puzzle the young scholar with difficult questions: but his replies discovered such sound judgment, and were expressed in such manly language, that the Queen was exceedingly delighted with him, and used to call him her young Lord Keeper. At twelve years of age he was entered a student at Cambridge, and placed under the tuition of Dr. Whitgift, the master of Trinity College, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury. Here he applied with great ardour to the study

¹³ Vidend. Sanchez de Arte nihil sciendi. p. 193. Schmidii Diss. de Themata Christi natal. Scalegeriana prima. p. 48. Vogt. in Cat. Lib. rar. p. 167. Reiman. Hist. Ath. 8. iii. c. 4. § 11. Parker de Deo Disp. i. p. 72. 210. Arnold. Hist. Ec. p. ii. l. xvii. p. 324. Voss. de Theol. Gent. l. iii. c. 8.

of the sciences, particularly of the Aristotellian philosophy, which still continued to be taught in the English schools; but before he had attained his sixteenth year, he began to be dissatisfied with a method of philosophizing, which was rather adapted to create disputes, than to promote the happiness of human life, and determined, if possible, to strike out some more promising way of investigating truth, than the Stagyrice, or any of the ancients, had discovered.

After he had passed through the usual course of academical studies, Bacon was sent by his father to France, with the ambassador, Sir Amias Pawlet, in order to introduce him to the knowledge of political science, and enlarge his acquaintance with the world. How well he profited by this tour, appears from the judicious observations "On the State of Europe," which he wrote in his eighteenth year. His father's death, which happened suddenly during his visit to France, left him, who was the youngest of five brothers, in circumstances which rendered it necessary for him to engage in some lucrative profession; and he entered upon the study of the law in Gray's-Inn. Here his superior talents, supported by indefatigable industry, soon made him an eminent proficient in the English law; and he was, by the favour of Elizabeth, appointed one of her council extraordinary. In the mean time he never lost sight of his favourite object; for it was during this period of his life, that he formed the outline of his great work, "The Instauration of the Sciences," in a treatise to which he gave the vaunting title of *Temporis Partus maximus*, "The greatest Birth of Time;" an expression of vanity of which he afterwards repented, as appears from a letter to Father Fulgentio, of Venice. This piece is not found among his works.

From this time Bacon appears upon the public theatre of the political world. But neither his great abilities, nor his accomplished manners, nor the interest of Essex, the queen's favourite, nor even the favour of the queen herself, (for she often consulted him on affairs of state,) could so far overcome the jealousy of the ministers, and the spirit of faction, as to obtain for him any advantageous post. At last, Essex, who had in vain solicited public favour for

his friend, and who saw him now almost driven by spleen and resentment to forsake his country, from his own private bounty presented him with a valuable estate, which he afterwards sold for eighteen hundred pounds. And we must add, though it is an indelible blot upon the memory of this great man, that, after the disgraceful execution of Essex, he had the disingenuity to write, at the instigation of the ministry, a formal justification of their conduct, at the expense of the reputation of his friend and benefactor. All the obsequiousness of Bacon could not, however, procure him the favour of the court; and it was not till James the First ascended the throne, that he obtained any reward for his superior learning and abilities more substantial than the empty breath of fame. By means of his excellent treatise "On the Advancement of Learning," he soon obtained access to that prince, who valued himself upon being a patron of learning, and notwithstanding the violent opposition of the Earl of Salisbury, and Sir Edward Coke, he obtained, in the year 1607, the place which he had long desired, of solicitor general. In the midst of the engagements of this office he continued, however, to pursue his philosophical researches; for in 1610, he published his treatise "On the Wisdom of the Ancients."

In 1613, Sir Francis Bacon (for James had, soon after his accession, conferred upon Bacon the honour of knighthood) was appointed attorney general; an office, the profits of which amounted to 6000*l.* a-year. This income, together with the wealth he had acquired by marriage and from other sources, might justly have been expected to have raised so eminent a philosopher above all temptation to servility and peculation. But ambition seduced this great man from the path of integrity. In order to obtain the honourable post of lord high chancellor of England, he descended to the meanest and most unwarrantable artifices. He endeavoured to destroy the popularity of his rival, Sir Edward Coke; he made use of undue influence in the House of Commons, and he yielded implicit submission to the will and humour of the prince. By these arts, in the year 1617, Sir Francis obtained the seals with the title of lord keeper; and in the year 1618, was created lord high chancellor of England, with the title of

Baron of Verulam, which he the next year changed for that of Viscount of St. Alban's. But neither the avocations of the court, nor the labours of his office, could entice him from his favourite studies. In the year 1620, he published a work on which he had been engaged twelve years, and which obtained him immortal honour, his *Novum Organon Scientiarum*, "New Organ of the Sciences."

In the midst of Lord St. Alban's splendour and wealth, an incident occurred which proved ruinous to his fortune, and at the same time to his reputation. The king, in order to supply his extravagances, among other expedients, made use of illegal patents for monopolies. To these patents the learned chancellor, through the instigation of the Duke of Buckingham, had affixed the great seal. The whole proceeding gave much offence to the public; complaints respecting these unjust and oppressive monopolies were brought into parliament; and the Duke of Buckingham, to extricate himself out of this hazardous situation, persuaded the king to lay the blame upon the lord chancellor. The king, whose fondness for Buckingham exceeded all bounds, listened to the proposal, and even prevailed upon Lord St. Alban's to submit his conduct to public examination without attempting his own defence, or being present at the trial; promising, on his royal word, to screen him in the last determination of the court, or, if that could not be done, to make him ample recompence. The consequence was, that the lord chancellor was, in 1621, accused before the House of Lords of bribery and corruption, and sentenced to undergo a fine of forty thousand pounds, to be imprisoned in the Tower during the king's pleasure, to be for ever incapable of holding any public office, and never to sit again in parliament, or come within the verge of the court. After a short confinement in the Tower, the king gave him his liberty, and about three years afterwards revoked the whole sentence by an entire pardon. Lord St. Alban's was thus restored to his honours, and men seemed willing to forget that so great a man had ever been capable of offending. From this time, however, mortified no doubt by the recollection of his public disgrace, and the consciousness of having too well deserved it, he declined all concern in affairs of state, and.

devoted himself to retirement and study. It was during these last years of his life, which were clouded with care, as well as loaded with regret, that Lord Bacon wrote the greater part of his valuable works. After having been for some time in a declining state, he died, in the year 1626, of a fever, which was occasioned by pursuing, with more application than his strength would bear, certain experiments respecting the preservation of bodies.¹⁵

Without dwelling upon a subject so humiliating as the inconsistencies and blemishes of a great and exalted mind, we will immediately proceed to consider Bacon in the light in which he will unquestionably be admired by the most remote posterity, as, among the moderns, the first great improver of philosophy.

Possessing by nature a strong and penetrating judgment, and having inured himself from his childhood to a habit of close attention and deep thinking, Bacon was capable of taking an accurate and comprehensive survey of the regions of knowledge, and of thoroughly examining the foundations of those structures which had hitherto been honoured with the title of systems of philosophy. His first great attempt in philosophy was his incomparable treatise "On the Advancement of Learning," first published in English, and afterwards translated by himself, with the assistance of some friends, into Latin.

The great design of this work was, to take an accurate survey of the whole extent of the intellectual world; to review the state of knowledge, as it then stood, in its several branches, in order to discover how far science had been successfully prosecuted, and what improvements might still be made for the benefit of mankind; and to point out general methods for the correction of error, and the advancement of knowledge. The author, following the division of nature into the three faculties of the Soul, Memory, Imagination, and Understanding, classes all knowledge under three general heads, corresponding to these faculties, History, Poetry, Philosophy. Philosophy he considers as the universal science, which is the parent of all others, and divides it into three branches—that which treats of God, or natural theology; that which treats of nature,

¹⁵ Rawley's and Mallet's Life of Lord Bacon. Bayle.

or natural philosophy; and that which treats of man, or human and civil philosophy. Natural philosophy he distributes into Speculative and Operative; including under the former head, physics, which treat of the general principles of nature, of the frame of the world, and of distinct bodies, and their common or peculiar properties; and metaphysics, which treat of forms and final causes: and comprehending under the latter, mechanics, as deduced from general physical causes; and magic, or the knowledge of peculiar properties and powers in nature, and of their application to produce unusual effects. Mathematics he considers as an appendage to natural philosophy. The philosophy of human nature he views generally and specially; generally, as it respects the whole man, liable to miseries, or possessing prerogatives, and as regarding the mutual connexion and influence of the mind and body; specially, as it respects human nature divided into body, the subject of medicinal, cosmetic, athletic, and voluptuary arts; and soul, whether rational or sensible, with its various faculties, their use and objects; and, as it respects civil life, comprehending conversation, negotiation, and government. Under the head of "The Use and Objects of the Faculties of the Mind," he includes Logic, comprehending inquiry or invention, examination or judgment, custody or memory, and elocution or tradition, in all the forms of speech and writing; and Ethics, treating of the nature of good, simple or comparative, and of the culture of the mind, respecting its natural or accidental characters, and its affections and distempers. To all this the author adds a discourse concerning the limits and use of human reason in matters Divine.

From this brief analysis of this excellent work, the reader may in some measure perceive, with what compass of thought and strength of judgment Bacon examined the whole circle of sciences; and if the treatise be carefully perused, as it ought to be by every one who is desirous of methodising and enlarging his conceptions on the general objects of science, the reader will not fail to admire the active and penetrating genius of the author, who could alone discover so many things, of which former ages had been ignorant, and hold up to posterity a light, by which

they have been so successfully guided into new fields of science. The numerous *desiderata* which he has suggested in almost every branch of science, have furnished hints to succeeding philosophers, which have greatly contributed towards the leading object of all his philosophical labours, the advancement of learning.

Bacon was now desirous of becoming a faithful and useful guide to others in the pursuit of knowledge, by pointing out to them the best method of employing their reasoning faculties on the several objects of philosophy; and for this purpose wrote his *Novum Organon*, a treatise which the author himself esteemed the most valuable of his works. Rejecting the syllogistic method of reasoning, as a mere instrument of Scholastic disputation, which could not be applied with any advantage to the study of nature, he attempts, in this work, to substitute in its stead the method of induction, in which natural objects are subjected to the test of observation and experiment, in order to furnish certain facts as the foundation of general truths. By this expedient he hoped to remove those obstructions to the progress of knowledge, the prejudices (called by our author *Idolæ*) arising from ancient authority, from false methods of reasoning, or from the natural imbecility of the human mind. Physical Experiment, the *organ* or instrument which he proposed for the investigation of nature, he considered as the only effectual method of drawing men off from those uncertain speculations, which, contributing nothing towards, discovering the true nature of things, only serve to bewilder the imagination, and confound the judgment. For the particular precepts which Bacon prescribed for this purpose, we must refer the reader to the work itself, which will amply repay the labour of a diligent perusal. The great number of new terms which the author introduces, and the complex mode of arrangement which he adopts, cast indeed some degree of obscurity over the work, and have perhaps rendered it less useful than it would otherwise have been: but the reader who has the courage to overcome these difficulties will meet with many excellent observations, which may materially contribute, even in the present advanced state of natural knowledge, to the improvement of science. But the principal value of this work is,

that it represents in the most lively colours, the nature, the strength, and the mischievous effects of prejudice, and lays open the various circumstances which have, in all ages, hindered the free and successful pursuit of knowledge.

The way being thus prepared, Bacon applied himself chiefly to the improvement of that branch of philosophy which best suited his inclination, physics; and, though he did not attempt to frame a system of natural philosophy, he wrote several treatises, which contain original observations on various branches of natural science, but are chiefly valuable as a pattern to posterity, of the manner in which these researches should be pursued. His philosophical treatises are—Of Words; Of Rarefaction and Condensation; Of Sympathy; Of Life and Death; Of the Three Chemical Principles; Of Bodies, heavy and light; On speculative and essential Physics; Description of the Intellectual World; Plan of the Heavens; On the Tides; The Philosophy of Parmenides, Telesius, and Democritus; Indications for the Interpretation of Nature; Of the Wisdom of the Ancients; A History of Nature; and, A new Atlantis. Besides these he wrote several moral, political, and historical pieces, somewhat obscure in expression, but full of profound thought and just reflection, and worthy of an attentive and frequent perusal. This latter class of his writings is enlivened with examples, narratives, apothegms, similes, and many other decorations. His entire works have been published in England, Holland, and Germany.

The only thing to be regretted in the writings of Bacon is, that he has increased the difficulties necessarily attending his original and profound researches, by too freely making use of new terms, and by loading his arrangement with an excessive multiplicity and minuteness of divisions. But an attentive and accurate reader, already not unacquainted with philosophical subjects, will meet with no insuperable difficulties in studying his works, and, if he be not a wonderful proficient in science, will reap much benefit as well as pleasure from the perusal. In fine, Lord Bacon, by the universal consent of the learned world, is to be ranked in the first class of modern philosophers. He unquestionably belonged to that superior order of men,

who, by enlarging the boundaries of human knowledge, have been benefactors to mankind; and he may not improperly be styled, on account of the new track of science which he explored, the Columbus of the philosophical world.¹⁶

SECT. IV.

Of Thomas Campanella.

AT the same time that Bacon was improving philosophy in Britain, attempts of a similar kind, but with far inferior success, were made in Italy by Campanella, a man whose natural genius prompted him to bold innovations.

Thomas Campanella,¹⁷ a native of Calabria, was born in the year 1568. From his infancy he discovered a wonderful memory, and a singular genius. At thirteen years of age he was able to write verses with great facility. Having been early instructed in theological subjects, his first ambition was to rival the fame of the great Albert, and Thomas Aquinas; and he entered his name in that monastic order which they had so much adorned, the fraternity of Dominicans. In the convent of San Giorgio, he engaged with great industry and ardour in the study of philosophy; but he soon discovered the sterility of the ancient method of philosophizing, and, after in vain seeking for satisfaction from Aristotle or Plato, Zeno or Epicurus, he had recourse, when he was about eighteen years of age, to a modern master, who had professed to study the nature of things rather than the speculations of philosophers. The philosophy of Telesius about this time engaging much attention in Italy, Campanella read his treatise "On the Nature of Things," and was so much captivated with the bold and free spirit of this work, that he determined to leave the barren desert of the Aristotelian Scholastics, for the more pleasant and fruitful fields of the Telesian phi-

¹⁶ Vidend. Oper. Lond. 1740. 1765.

¹⁷ E. S. Cypriani Vit. Camp. Amst. 1705. Niccron. Mem. Lit. t. i. Erythr. Pinacoth. l. i. p. 41. Struv. Act. Lit. fasc. ii. p. 71. Stollii Hist. Lit. p. ii. c. i. § 91.

losophy. He wrote a defence of Telesius against Antoninus Marta, who had undertaken the refutation of that philosopher's doctrine, in a work entitled *Pugnaculum Aristotelis*, "A Defence of Aristotle," and came to Naples to publish his work, which was entitled, *Philosophia Sensibus demonstrata*, "Philosophy demonstrated to the Senses."

The contempt with which Campanella, in this work, treated the authority of Aristotle, raised a violent ferment among his monastic brethren, which was still further increased by the bold and decisive tone with which he contradicted long established tenets in public disputations. Supported however by wealthy patrons, and still more by his own firm and independent spirit, he persevered in the design which he had long formed of attempting the reformation of philosophy. He wrote two treatises, one, *De Sensu Rerum*, "On Sensation;" the other, *De Investigatione*, "On Investigation," from a persuasion, as he himself says, that it was necessary to point out to young men, some better way to the knowledge of things than Aristotle or Plato had taught, and that they should be instructed to reason, not after the manner of Raymond Lully, upon mere words, but upon sensible objects.

Neither the power of his genius, nor the patronage of his friends, could, however, secure Campanella from insult and persecution. To escape these, he removed from Naples to Rome, and afterwards to Florence, Venice, Padua, and Bologna. At last he settled in his native country, and, probably, in order to cover his innovations with the shield of orthodoxy, wrote in defence of the see of Rome. But, notwithstanding this precaution, he soon fell under suspicions which proved fatal to him. He was accused of being concerned in a conspiracy against the King of Spain and the Neapolitan government, and, after undergoing torture, was confined in prison about twenty-seven years, during a great part of which time he was denied the privilege of reading and writing. As soon as this indulgence was granted him, he wrote several books, among which were a treatise on the Spanish Monarchy, and his "Real Philosophy." These he sent into Germany to be published. Many attempts were made by his friends to obtain his liberation; but they were unsuccessful.

ful, till Pope Urban VIII. a patron of learned men, prevailed upon Philip IV. of Spain to grant him an acquittal from the charge of treason. In 1626 he was set at liberty; but finding himself still insecure in Italy, he found means, under the connivance and favour of the pope, to escape to France, where he experienced the favour of Cardinal Richieu, who procured for him a pension from Louis XIII. He passed the remainder of his days in a Dominican monastery at Paris, where he continued to enjoy the society of many learned men, till, in the seventy-first year of his age, he expired.

Campanella was confessedly a man of genius; but his imagination predominated over his judgment. Innumerable proofs of this may be found in his astrological writings, in his book *De Sensu Rerum*, and in many other parts of his works. Can it be doubted that a man, who gave credit to the art of astrology; who believed that he was cured of a disease by the words and prayers of an old woman; who thought that demons appeared to him, and conversed with him; and who persuaded himself, that when any danger threatened him, he was, between sleeping and waking, warned of it by a voice which called him by his name; was destitute of that sound judgment which is so essential a quality in the character of a philosopher? But notwithstanding all his childish credulity, and all the eccentricity of his genius, Campanella had his lucid and happy intervals, in which he reasoned soberly. He is chiefly worthy of praise for the freedom with which he exposed the futility of the Aristotelian philosophy, and for the pains which he took to deduce natural science from observation and experience.¹⁸ Of the numerous writings which his fertile imagination produced, the most celebrated are, *Prodomus Philosophiæ Instaurandæ*, "A Precursor to the Restoration of Philosophy;" *Atheismus triumphatus*, "Atheism subdued;" *De Gentilismo non retinendo*, "On the Rejection of Paganism;" *Astrologica*, "On Astrology;" *Philosophia rationalis*, "Rational Philosophy;" *Civitas Solis*, "The City of the Sun;" *Universalis Philosophia*, "Universal Philosophy;" *De Libris*

¹⁸ Conring. de Prud. Civ. c. 14. Adami Præf. Prodom. Ph. Camp. Id. in Epilogismo.

proprie, "On his own Books;" *De recta Ratione studendi*, "On the right Method of Studying."

Though Campanella read much, as appears from many of his writings, particularly from his treatise, "On the Method of Studying," he paid little respect to the opinions of others. He controverted many of the notions even of his master Telesius, and advanced many dogmas of his own, in dialectics, physics, and ethics.

In dialectics, Campanella's chief object seems to have been, to recede as far as possible from the Peripatetics, but his logic abounds with subtle distinctions, useless terms, and obscure rules, upon which the lowest censure we can pass is, that they are no improvement upon Aristotle.

Concerning nature,¹⁹ the leading doctrines of Campanella were as follow. Sense is the only guide in philosophy, and is distinguished into present perception, anticipation, and inference from things perceived to things not perceived. The essence and existence of things are the same. Space is the first incorporeal substance, immovable, the receptacle of all bodies. Time is the successive duration of things, and is only measured by motion. God placed matter in the midst of space, and appointed two principles, Heat and Cold, to act upon the common mass. Heat formed the heavens from rarefied matter; Cold produced the earth, from matter condensed. Heat, in repelling the contrary principle, moves the heavens in a circular orbit, and where its power of rarefaction is overcome by Cold, its portions of matter being condensed, become lucid bodies, or stars. Cold, continually repelling Heat equally in all directions, the earth, the mass upon which it acts, remains immovable. Matter, being invisible, is black; light is vivid whiteness; the colour of cold is unknown, but it is probably black. The sun and the earth are the two elements whence all things are produced; air and water are not elements, because they cannot produce their like. The different forms in nature arise from the different ways and degrees in which the principles of heat and cold act upon matter. All animal operations are produced by one

¹⁹ Prodrum. Phil. Instaur. Compend. Diss. de Natura Rerum. De Sensu Rerum.

universal spirit, which acts in all sensoriums. All things in nature, the elements, with their causes and effects, have the sense of feeling in which they are passive, and have withal a consciousness of impressions, and a perception of the objects by which they are produced. The world is an animal or sentient being, and since nature abhors a vacuum, its parts seek each other with delight, and enjoy mutual contact. Matter itself is sentient, and, being in its nature dark and without form, seeks to be adorned with colour and forms, which are communicated to it by the active principles of nature. The soul, or principle of animal life, is a rare substance, capable of receiving impressions from things dissimilar, but not from those which are similar to itself, whence it perceives gross bodies, but not air or spirit; it is not a property of the body, but an agent inclosed in, and operating upon the body. The human soul descends from an infinite cause, towards which it tends, and is immortal. The world itself has a soul, by which it is directed, as man by the Divine Principle within him. The first, greatest, and only true Being, in whom power, wisdom, and love exist as primary principles, transmits his inexhaustible ideas, by means of the active causes, heat and cold, to the corporeal masses, supported in space, the basis of the world, which itself has its stability in God. All creatures are excellent, in proportion to the degree in which they bear the image of the essential principles of the Divine Nature. Human depravity consists in the loss of this image, and human perfection in its restoration.

As far as any idea of the philosophical character of Campanella can be formed from the confused mass of opinions, so diffusely but obscurely expressed in his voluminous writings, we must conclude, that, notwithstanding the censures which have often been passed upon him for impiety, he is rather to be ranked among enthusiasts than atheists; and that, as in his other undertakings, so also in his attempts to reform philosophy, he was unsuccessful.

* Eclardi Script. Ord. Predic. Branchadori Orat. Praem. de Orti Pontif. Blount. Cens. p. 436. Morhoff. Polyh. t. ii. l. ii. p. 1. 2. 14. 68. Naud. Bibliog. c. 2.

SECT. V.

Of Thomas Hobbes.

ANOTHER Englishman who made bold attempts towards the improvement of philosophy, was *Thomas Hobbes*,^a born in 1588, at Malmesbury, in Wiltshire. Through premature birth, occasioned by his mother's terror at the rumour of the approach of the Spanish invincible armada towards the British coast, he had a feeble constitution; but he early discovered uncommon vigour of mind, and made such rapid progress in learning, that, while he was a boy, he translated the *Medea* of Euripides into elegant Latin verse. At fourteen years of age he was sent by his uncle to Oxford, where, for five years, he applied with great industry to the study of logic and the Peripatetic philosophy. He was then appointed tutor to a young nobleman, the son of Lord Hardwick, with whom he made the tour of France and Italy. This opportunity of seeing the celebrated monuments of antiquity, conversing with learned men, and becoming acquainted with the policy and manners of foreign states, Hobbes assiduously improved. Upon his return, entertaining a strong persuasion of the inanity and inutilty of the Peripatetic philosophy, he resolved to devote his leisure to the study of the ancients, that he might collect whatever was most valuable from their writings. His high reputation for learning introduced him to the acquaintance of Lord Bacon and Lord Herbert, of Cherbury, who engaged him to assist them in translating their works into Latin. The conversation of these great men excited in him a violent aversion to Scholastic learning, and an earnest desire of investigating truth with a liberal and independent spirit. It was a circumstance which greatly increased his love of philosophy, that in a visit which he paid to France and Italy, about the year 1635, he became acquainted with several eminent philosophers, particularly Mersenne and Gassendi, with whom he formed an intimate friendship, and after his return kept up a constant correspondence.

^a Life by R. R. 1685. Bayle. Wood Hist. Ox. l. ii. p. 376. Blount. Cens. p. 1046. Epist. præf. Lib. de Cive.

The dissensions in Great Britain, about the year 1637, rising to great violence, Hobbes, whose connexions and principles made him a zealous advocate for the royal cause, rendered himself so obnoxious to the popular party, that he thought it prudent to retire to Paris, where he enjoyed the society of many philosophical friends. Among others, he was introduced to the celebrated philosopher Des Cartes, and began an epistolary correspondence with him on the nature and laws of motion, on optics, and other topics of natural philosophy. When Des Cartes first wrote his "Philosophical Meditations" on God and the human mind, and other pneumatological subjects, he submitted it to the examination of his learned friends, and amongst the rest to Hobbes, who sent his observations on the work to their common friend Mersenne, by whom they were communicated to Des Cartes. Hobbes, who was of opinion that thought may be a property of body, contradicted some of the first principles of Des Cartes' system. A correspondence was opened upon the subject; but Des Cartes, affecting to treat his opponent with some degree of contempt, as destitute of solidity and depth of judgment, soon dropped the controversy.

Whilst Hobbes was in Paris, he was recommended to Charles, prince of Wales, the heir apparent to the crown of England, who, at that time, resided in Paris for the sake of safety, as a proper person to instruct him in the elements of mathematics and philosophy. This circumstance strengthened his attachment to the royal cause, and he completed his treatise on government, entitled, *De Cive*, which had long been in contemplation, and in 1642, printed a few copies for the use of his friends. It was afterwards, in 1647, published with material corrections and improvements. The work, the object of which was to check the rising spirit of freedom, by establishing the claims of monarchy on new principles of philosophy, was as much condemned by one party as it was admired by the other.

About this time, Hobbes entered into a controversy with Bishop Bramhall on the subject of liberty, in an epistolary correspondence, which, being communicated to a friend in France, was translated into French, and afterwards,

without the consent of Hobbes, published in England; Bramhall, displeased at the publication of these papers, continued the dispute, and the whole controversy was collected into one volume, and printed in London, in the year 1656.²² Hobbes strenuously maintained the doctrine of necessity, established on the absolute power and irresistible will of God, which was the less surprising, as at that time the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination was generally received. Many of the clergy, in their zeal to oppose the doctrine of Hobbes, which they thought subversive of morality, deserted Calvin, and embraced the Arminian tenet of free will.

In the year 1650, Hobbes wrote his treatise on "Human Nature," which was, in the opinion of Mr. Addison, his best work, and another, *De Corpore politico*, "Of the Political Body." The year following, he published his "Leviathan;" a treatise, in which, in establishing a system of civil policy, he represents man as an untameable beast of prey, and government as the strong chain by which he is to be kept from mischief. This work, though learned and ingenious, advanced such bold and paradoxical opinions, both in philosophy and policy, that the whole body of the English clergy took the alarm, and the author was strongly suspected to be, in religion, inimical to revelation, and in policy, to favour the cause of democracy. The indignation which this publication excited, was probably, in a great measure, owing to the freedom with which it inveighs against ecclesiastical tyranny.

The suspicions which were, on this occasion, raised against Hobbes, dissolved his connexion with Prince Charles at Paris; and, in 1653, he returned to England, and found a welcome asylum in the Devonshire family. From this time, declining all political disputes, he spent his days in philosophical studies, and in the society of learned men, among whom were Harvey and Selden. He published, first in Latin, and afterwards in English, a treatise "On Bodies," in which he undertakes to explain the principles of nature. He wrote a treatise on geometry,

²² Entitled "Questions touchant la Liberté, la Necessité, et le Hazard éclaircés et debatues entre le Dr. Bramhall, Eveque de Derry, et Thomas Hobbes de Malmesbury;"

in which he advanced many things contrary to the received doctrine of geometrists, and brought upon himself (whether justly or not it is not our business to inquire) a severe censure, for attempting to correct what he did not himself sufficiently understand. To complete his body of philosophy, he published, in 1659, "A Dissertation on Man," in which he advanced many singular opinions concerning the intellectual and moral powers of human nature.

After the Restoration, Hobbes came to London, and was graciously received by the king, who admitted him to a private audience, and gave him a pension of one hundred pounds *per annum*. Through the vigilance of the clergy, he was, however, prevented from executing his favourite design of collecting and republishing his works in English; and was obliged to send them over to Amsterdam, where an entire edition in Latin was published.²³ Whilst the writings of Hobbes were reprobated by the general body of the clergy, and occasioned many learned and able replies, they were not without their admirers both at home and abroad. Foreigners of the first distinction visited him; among whom was Cosmo de Medicis, then prince of Tuscany. Even in the public schools his doctrines had professed advocates; and Daniel Scargil, a Cambridge scholar, maintained some of his fundamental tenets in a public disputation; on which account he was expelled from the University. This circumstance brought so much odium upon Hobbes, that Bishop Fell, in his Latin edition of Wood's *Athenæ Oxoniensis*, thought it necessary to leave out the eulogium which the author had passed upon the philosopher of Malmesbury; and insert in its stead a severe censure. Wood, offended at this freedom, acquainted Hobbes, who wrote a letter in justification of himself to the author of the *Athenæ Oxoniensis*, which was published at Oxford. This produced from Fell a bitter invective, to which Hobbes, who was now far advanced in years, made no reply. In his last days he retired into the country, and employed himself in translating Homer, and writing the history of the civil war.

This latter work Hobbes could not obtain the royal permission to publish; but it was sent into the world by a friend, at Amsterdam, in 1668.

friend, without his knowledge. . . . He died in the year 1679; having lived to the great age of ninety-one. . . . Hobbes was certainly possessed of vigorous faculties; and had he been sufficiently careful to form and improve his judgment, and to preserve his mind free from the bias of prejudice and passion, would undoubtedly have deserved a place in the first class of philosophers. The mathematical method of reasoning which he adopted, greatly assisted him in his researches; but he was often led into error, by assuming false or uncertain principles or axioms. The vehemence with which he engaged in political contests biassed his judgment on questions of policy, and led him to frame such maxims and rules of government, as would be destructive of the peace and happiness of mankind. An arrogant contempt of the opinions of others, an impatience of contradiction, and a restless ambition to be distinguished as an innovator in philosophy, were qualities which appear to have contributed in no small degree to the perversion of his judgment. To enumerate all the particulars in which Hobbes departs from the beaten track of opinions, would carry us beyond our limits. The following positions, chiefly selected from his *Leviathan*, may serve as a specimen of his philosophy.

All knowledge originates in sensation, and is produced by the pressure, either immediate or mediate, of external objects upon the senses. Sensible qualities are, in their objects, nothing more than the motion of matter operating variously upon the organs of sensation. Imagination and memory are the permanent effects of former impressions upon the senses. Thinking is the succession of one imagination after another, which may be either irregular or regulated with a view to some end. Every conception, being derived from the senses, is finite; we have, therefore, no idea of infinity, and God is an object, not of apprehension, but of reverence. No one can conceive of any thing but as existing in some place, of some finite magnitude, and divisible into parts; nor can any thing be wholly in one place and wholly in another at the same time, or two or more things be at the same time in the same place. Truth and falsehood are attributes, not of things, but of language. The intellect peculiar to man is a faculty

arising from speech; and the use of reason is the deduction of remote consequences from the definitions of terms. Science is the knowledge of these consequences. There are in animals two kinds of motion—one, vital and involuntary; the other, animal and voluntary. The latter, if it tends towards an object, is appetite; if it recedes from it, aversion; and the object in the former case is said to be good, in the latter, evil. Appetite is attended with pleasure, aversion with pain. In deliberation, the last impulse of the appetite is will; success in obtaining its object, enjoyment. Moral qualities are those by which the peace and security of the state are preserved. Felicity consists not in tranquillity, but in a perpetual progress from one desire to another. The diversity of human characters arises from the different ways in which men pursue happiness.

The desire of investigating causes leads to the knowledge and belief of a first cause, the one eternal Deity, although the Divine Nature is incomprehensible. From men's ignorance of true causes arises anxiety, fear, superstition.

Nature has formed all men equal; whence arises the universal hope of acquiring by violence whatever we desire, and the universal apprehension of suffering violence from others. The necessary consequence is, that a state of nature is a state of perpetual hostility, in which no individual has any other means of safety than his own strength or ingenuity, and in which there is no room for industry, because no secure enjoyment of its fruits. In this state, every one has a right to use his own faculties at pleasure for his preservation, and of doing whatever he judges to be conducive to this end; and since there is no property, there can be no injustice.

For the sake of peace and security, it is necessary that each individual recede from a part of his natural right, and be contented with such a share of liberty, or freedom from restraint, as he is willing to allow to others. This resignation of natural rights may either be a simple renunciation or a transfer of them, as an individual or body, by mutual consent, for the common good. The multitude, thus brought out of a state of nature, becomes one person,

which is called the Republic or State, in which the common power and will are exercised for the common defence. The ruling power cannot be taken from those to whom it has been committed, nor can they be punished for mal-administration. If the supreme magistrate inflicts any penalty upon the innocent, he sins against God, but does not act unjustly. The interpretation of the laws is to be sought, not from preceptors nor philosophers, but from the authority of the state; for it is not truth, but authority that makes law; nevertheless, the king ought to interpret the law according to his own natural reason and conscience. Punishment is an evil inflicted upon the transgressor of the law, to this end, that the apprehension of it may bend the will of the citizens to submission. The public law is to be instead of conscience to every individual; it is therefore false, that every violation of conscience in a citizen is a sin. The offices of the supreme governors are to be regulated by those ends, which comprehend the security of the people.

Although Hobbes often admits false principles, and advances pernicious tenets, many just and profound observations are to be met with in his writings, which have probably led the way to the improvement of moral and political science.

It is much to be regretted that Hobbes, though he had the precept and example of Lord Bacon to guide him, neglected the new and fertile path of experimental philosophy. So little was he aware of the value of this kind of knowledge, that he censured the Royal Society of London, at its first institution, for attending more to minute experiment than general principles, and said, that if the name of a philosopher was to be obtained by relating a multifarious farrago of experiments, we might expect to see apothecaries, gardeners, and perfumers, rank among philosophers.*

* Vidend. Burnet's Hist. of his Own Time, v. i. p. 36. 92. 150. 211. Gundling. Obs. Select. t. i. Obs. 2. Gundlingiana, p. xiv. Huberus Orat. de Pædantismo, p. 66. Rapin. Reflex. sur la Phil. p. 65. Cumberland on the Law of Nature, Lond. 1672. Puffendorf. Erid. Scand. p. 206. Andree Discuss. fundam. Hobbesii. 1672.

SECT. VI.

Of Des Cartes.

IN modern times, few philosophers have a higher claim to distinction, both on account of the variety and originality of his speculations, and the celebrity which he obtained in the philosophical world, than Des Cartes, who, though the father of a sect, himself pursued his researches with such a free and independent spirit, as justly entitles him to a place among the Eclectics.

Renes Des Cartes,²⁵ a native of France, was born in 1596, at La Haye in Tourain. Whilst he was a child, he discovered an eager curiosity to inquire into the nature and causes of things, which procured him the appellation of the Young Philosopher. At eight years of age, he was committed to the care of Dinet, a learned Jesuit, under whom he made uncommon proficiency in learning. But a habit of close and deep reflection soon enabled him to discover defects in the books which he read, and in the instructions which he received, which led him to form the ambitious hope that he should, in some future time, carry science to a point of perfection which it had never hitherto reached. After spending five years in the diligent study of languages, and in reading the ancient poets, orators, and historians, he passed on to severer studies, and made himself well acquainted with the elements of mathematics, logic, and morals, as they had been hitherto taught. His earnest desire of attaining an accurate knowledge of every thing which became a subject of contemplation to his inquisitive mind, did not, however, in any of these branches of science meet with full satisfaction. Concerning Logic, particularly, he complained, that after the most diligent examination he found the syllogistic forms, and almost every other precept of the art, more useful in enabling a man to communicate to others truths already known, or rather, like the Lullian art, in qualifying him to discourse copiously upon subjects which he does not understand, than

²⁵ Baillet. Vit. Cartes, Par. 1691. Epit. 1693. Borelli et Tessellii Vit. Cart. Witte Mem. Phil. dec. iv. p. 590. Nicéron, t. 31. p. 274. Sturm. Diss. de Cart. Bayle.

assisting him in the investigation of truths, of which he is at present ignorant. Hence he was induced to forsake the beaten track, and to frame for himself a brief system of rules or canons of reasoning, in which he followed the strict method of the Geometricians. He pursued the same plan with respect to Morals. But, after all his speculations, he was not able to attain the entire satisfaction which he so earnestly desired; and, at the close of eight years' assiduous application in the Jesuits' college at La Flèche, he returned to his parents, lamenting, that he had derived no other benefit from his studies, than a fuller conviction that he, as yet, knew nothing with perfect clearness and certainty. Despairing of being able to discover truth in the paths of learning, he now bade adieu to books, and resolved henceforth to pursue no other knowledge than that which he could find within himself, and in the great volume of nature.

Not yet more than seventeen years of age, he was sent to Paris by his father, who had such entire confidence in his understanding and discretion, that he left him to his own direction. He now, for a while, gave free scope to youthful vanity, and the love of pleasure, and would probably have been entirely lost to the philosophical world, had not the society of several learned men, to whom he was introduced, recalled his attention to mathematical studies, which he again prosecuted, in solitude and silence, for the space of two years. Still, however, unsatisfied with the result of his speculations, he renewed his purpose of forsaking books, and entered upon the military life, as a volunteer in the Dutch army; chiefly because he apprehended that this profession would give him an advantageous opportunity of conversing with the world. But even amidst the avocations of his new profession, his natural propensity to study returned, and he engaged in mathematical disquisitions, with an eminent mathematician at Breda, and wrote a philosophical dissertation, in which he attempted to prove that brutes are *automata*, or mere machines. From the Dutch army Des Cartes passed over into the Bavarian service. In winter quarters, whilst he was pursuing his speculations, perplexing himself with doubts, and supplicating Divine illumination, he was informed of the wonder-

ful pretensions of the Rosicrucian fraternity, and was willing to hope that he might gain, from men who boasted of Divine inspiration, that light which he had in vain sought from others. But, not being able to meet with any one who could unfold to him the mysteries of this sect, he soon finished his short excursion into the regions of enthusiasm, and returned to the humble path of rational inquiry. Wherever he went he conversed with learned men, and rather appeared in the character of a philosopher than a soldier. At last, he quitted the military profession, and after a tour through the northern parts of Germany, in the year 1622, returned to his own country, with no other profit from his travels, as he himself confesses, than that they had freed him from many prejudices, and rendered his mind more fit for the reception of truth.

Des Cartes now for a while made Paris his place of residence, and returned to the study of mathematics, not as an ultimate object (for he thought it a fruitless labour to fill the head with numbers and figures), but in hopes of discovering general principles of relations, measures, and proportions, applicable to all subjects, by means of which truth might be with certainty investigated, and the limits of knowledge materially enlarged. But not at present succeeding according to his wishes in this speculation, he turned his attention chiefly to ethical inquiries, and attempted to raise a superstructure of morals upon the foundation of natural science; for he was of opinion, that there could be no better means of discovering the true principles and rules of action, than by contemplating our own nature, and the nature of the world around us. This investigation produced his treatise "On the Passions."

Having employed a short time in these studies, Des Cartes undertook a literary and philosophical journey, and spent about two years in Italy, conversing with eminent mathematicians and philosophers, and attending to various objects of inquiry in natural history. He then returned into France; but his mind remaining in an unsettled and sceptical state, he found it impossible to pursue any regular plan of life, till, in the year 1629, he determined to withdraw from his numerous connexions and engagements in Paris, and retire into some foreign country, where he might

remain unknown, and have full leisure to complete his great design of framing a new system of philosophy. The country he chose for this purpose was Holland; and he went thither with so much secrecy, that the place of his retirement was for some time known only to his intimate friend, Marsenne, at Paris. He at first resided near Amsterdam, but afterwards went into the more northern provinces, and visited Deventer and Lewarden; he at last fixed upon Egmond, a pleasant village near Franeker, in the province of Friesland, as the place of his more stated residence. Here he prosecuted his philosophical labours, and saw them engage the attention of the learned world, in a manner which could not but be highly flattering to a mind not indifferent to honest fame. ek

In his retirement, Des Cartes employed himself in investigating a proof from reason, independent of revelation, of those fundamental points in religion, the existence of God, and the immortality of the soul, and in other important metaphysical speculations. The result of these speculations afterwards appeared in his treatise entitled *Meditationes Philosophicæ de Prima Philosophia*, "Philosophical Meditations on the First Philosophy." At the same time he pursued the physical inquiries which he had begun in France, particularly on the subject of optics; and these researches gave birth to his treatise "On Meteors." Besides this, he paid no slight attention to medicine, anatomy, and chemistry; he spent a whole winter in dissecting and examining animal bodies, and in chemical operations. He also wrote an astronomical treatise on the System of the World; but when he heard in what manner the astronomer Galileo had been treated by the court of inquisition, he was deterred from publishing it, and concealed his opinion concerning the true doctrine of the solar system.

The tenets of Des Cartes made their first appearance in the schools at Deventer, where, in 1633, they were introduced by the professor of philosophy, Henry Rener, a learned man, and an intimate friend of Gassendi. Not long afterwards, when, at the request of his friends, he published a specimen of his philosophy in four treatises, the number of his admirers and followers soon increased; and at the same time, as was to be expected, his new doctrine

had many opponents. At Utrecht, Leyden, and Amsterdam, and in other Dutch schools, the Cartesian doctrines were zealously espoused by many learned men; whilst several theologians, alarmed at the idea of innovation, strenuously opposed them, and even attempted to bring their author under the censure of the civil magistrate. In Great Britain, the Cartesian philosophy obtained such a degree of credit, that Sir Charles Cavendish, brother to the Earl of Newcastle, gave Des Cartes an invitation to settle in England. Charles the First gave him reason to expect a liberal appointment; and Des Cartes was not disinclined to place himself under such respectable patronage. But the civil wars frustrated this design, and Des Cartes remained in Holland. In his native country, his doctrine was at first well received, but a strong party soon rose against it among the Jesuits. Bourden, one of the fraternity, attacked his dioptrics in the public schools, and a violent contest was long kept up between the Jesuits and Cartesians. In the course of the disputes which the Cartesian philosophy occasioned, Des Cartes himself appeared earnestly desirous to become the father of a sect, and discovered more jealousy and ambition than became a philosopher.

During the course of Des Cartes' residence in Holland, he paid three visits to his native country; one in the year 1643, when he published an abstract of his philosophy, under the title of *Specimena Philosophica*, "Philosophical Specimens;" the second and third in 1647 and 1648, when he was amused with a promise of an annual pension of three thousand livres, which he never received. His chagrin upon this disappointment was, however, relieved by an invitation which, through the hands of the French ambassador, he received from Christina, Queen of Sweden, to visit Stockholm. That learned princess had read his treatise "On the Passions" with great delight, and was earnestly desirous to be instructed by him in the principles of his philosophy. Des Cartes, notwithstanding the difficulties which he apprehended from the severity of the climate, was prevailed upon to accept the invitation, and arrived at Stockholm in 1649. The queen gave him a respectful reception, and the singular talents which he discovered, in-

duced her earnestly to solicit this eminent philosopher to remain in her kingdom, and assist her in establishing an academy of sciences. But Des Cartes had not been more than four months in Sweden, when a cold which he caught in his early morning visits to the queen, whom he instructed in philosophy, brought on an inflammation of the lungs, which soon put a period to his life. The queen is said to have lamented his death with tears. His remains were interred, at the request of the French ambassador, in the cemetery for foreigners, and a long historical eulogium inscribed upon his tomb. Des Cartes died at the beginning of the year 1650. His bones were afterwards, in the year 1666, carried from Sweden into France, and interred with great pomp in the church of St. Genevieve du Mont.⁶⁶

The writings of this philosopher, the principal of which have been mentioned in the preceding narrative, prove him to have possessed an accurate and penetrating judgment, a fertile invention, and a mind superior to prejudice; qualities which, united with an early acquaintance with ancient learning, and indefatigable industry in the investigation of truth, might seem to promise no inconsiderable share of success in the great design of reforming and improving philosophy. Des Cartes would have been more successful, had he been less desirous of applying mathematical principles and reasonings to subjects which do not admit of them; had he set less value upon mere conjectures; and had he been less ambitious of the honour of founding a new sect in philosophy. His leading dogmas have, however, too much originality and celebrity to be overlooked in this work.

Upon the subject of *Logic*,⁶⁷ Des Cartes lays down the following rules for the discovery of truth, which are derived from the practice of Geometricians.

Nothing is ever to be admitted as true, which is not certainly and evidently known to be so; that is, in judging of truth all prejudice and precipitancy is carefully to be avoided, and nothing more is to be admitted in the conclusion, than what appears to the understanding so distinctly, and clearly, that it cannot possibly be doubted. Diffi-

⁶⁶ Blount. Cens. p. 1014. Littus de Leibnitz. et Pellisson, p. 389. Leibnitz. p. 7. 220. Fontenelle Eloge de M. Leibnitz.

⁶⁷ Disa. de Methodo,

calties must be accurately examined, and divided into as many parts, as may be most convenient for their easy solution. In proving any truth, the ideas are always to be brought forward in a certain order, beginning from things the most simple and most easily known, and advancing, by regular steps, to those which are more complex and difficult. All the parts of a demonstration should be so distinctly numbered, that the relation of each to the whole may be clearly seen, and that it may be certainly known that nothing is omitted.

The chief heads of the *Metaphysics*²² of Des Cartes are these :

Since every man is under the influence of prejudice, he ought, once in his life, in speculation, to doubt of every thing. Since the senses err, and dreams deceive, it is first to be doubted, whether sensible objects have a real existence. We must also doubt concerning those things which we have thought most certain, even mathematical axioms, because we are not sure that we may not have been so formed as to lie under a perpetual deception. We find ourselves, in the mean time, at liberty to withhold our assent from those propositions which are uncertain, and capable of guarding against error ; for which purpose the mind must divest itself of prejudice, and place itself in a proper situation for the reception of truth.

Whatever else we doubt of, it is impossible we should doubt whether we ourselves, who are conscious of exercising the power of thinking, exist. *I think, therefore I am*, is then the first and most certain truth in philosophy. In inquiring what sort of beings we are before we admit the existence of any thing external, we perceive belonging to our nature Thought, which has neither extension, figure, local motion, nor any other property which we commonly ascribe to bodies, and of the existence of which we have a prior and more certain knowledge than of that of any thing corporeal. The mind, which now knows itself, but still doubts of the existence of all other things, in looking around to extend its knowledge, first finds within itself Ideas ; concerning the existence of which, whilst it contemplates these alone, and neither affirms nor denies any thing

²² Princip. Phil. p. 1.

like them to exist externally, it cannot be deceived. It also finds within itself certain common notions, and from these frames various demonstrations, of the truth of which, whilst it attends to them, it is entirely persuaded. But because it does not yet know, whether it may not be so formed as to be deceived in those things which appear most evident, it perceives it impossible to admit any certain science till it has discovered the author of its being. Revolving within itself its various ideas, it finds one of a Being, supremely intelligent, powerful, and perfect, in which it discovers an existence, not possible and contingent only, as in its ideas of all other things, but necessary and eternal. Since it finds within itself this idea of a Supreme Being, which could not be a fiction of its own, it concludes with certainty, that it must have proceeded from a really existing Deity, and consequently that it represents a true and immutable nature, which cannot possibly not exist, that is God. Attending to this innate idea of Deity, we find him to be eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, the fountain of all goodness and truth, the creator of all things; Nothing can be an attribute of the Divine Nature which implies limit or imperfection; therefore he is incorporeal, indivisible, and void of passion, and exercises his understanding and volition, not by continued operations, but by the most simple action. In reasoning concerning natural things, we should argue not from final but efficient causes; and judge, not from what we imagine concerning the designs of God, but from what we know of his attributes. Because the perfect Deity must be a being of veracity, and incapable of deceiving his creatures, we may be assured, that whatever we clearly and distinctly perceive to be true, is really so.

The Cartesian doctrine of *Physics*²⁰ may be thus stated:

In nature there are two kinds of substance, that which thinks, or mind; and that which is extended, or body; the essence of the former is thought, of the latter, extension; other attributes ascribed to each are modes or qualities. All sensation proceeds from something different from the mind, which affects the senses. The idea of extended matter is presented to the mind; if therefore matter did not really exist, God, who presents this idea before the mind,

²⁰ Princip. Phil. p. ii. iii. iv. Dioptric.

would be a deceiver. Matter has therefore a real existence. From the constant testimony of feeling, we know that our minds are intimately united to an organized body. The sole essential property of body is extension; and quantity differs from extended substance only in our conceptions. Space, and the corporeal substance contained in it, are then in reality the same; for extension, in length, breadth, and depth, which constitutes space, also constitutes body. Since extension is universal, there is in nature no vacuum. It is impossible that any atoms, or particles of matter, should be so small as to be indivisible. Matter is one and the same through the whole universe, and exists without limit. Matter, considered with respect to its parts, is indivisible and immoveable, and all its variations depend upon motion, which consists in the removal of one body out of the vicinity of those which immediately touch it, into the vicinity of other bodies. There can be no motion but in a circuit, one body expelling another from the place into which it enters, while it is itself succeeded by a third, which occupies the place it has left. The first universal cause of all motion is God, who in the beginning communicated motion to matter, according to three laws of nature; the first, that every body will remain in the same state without some external cause of change; the second, that all bodies in motion move, or tend to move, in a right line; the third, that when one moving body meets another, if its moving force be less than the force of resistance in the other, it will retain all its motion, and only change the direction in which it moves.

The sun and all the fixed stars shine by their proper light; the moon, the earth, and planets borrow their light from the sun. The heavens may be conceived to be a vast fluid mass, revolving, in the manner of a vortex, round the sun. Each planet has its own portion of this fluid, or its own heaven, which revolves round the sun. These all move in the same direction, but with greater velocity in proportion as they are nearer the sun. Each planet, therefore, and among the rest the earth, is fixed with respect to its own vortex or heaven, but moves in its vortex round the sun. Within the greater vortices of the planets are other less vortices, moving in the same direction with the greater; one, in the centre of which is Jupiter; and another, in the

centre of which is the earth; by means of which the satellites of Jupiter, and the moon of the earth, revolve periodically round these planets.

The formation of the world may be conceived to have been thus effected. Suppose the matter of the world to have been originally divided into equal particles, having in the whole the same quantity of motion which is at present in nature: suppose these particles to have been equally moved, both individually and separately, round their respective centres, forming the fluid mass of the heavens; and collectively round certain fixed points, disposed in the same manner as are now the fixed stars and planets; whence as many vortices would be produced as there are at present moveable celestial bodies: suppose all the particles, in the beginning equal in matter and motion, to have been of irregular form, but in process of time made round by continual attrition arising from their circular motion: lastly, suppose the intervals between these to be filled up by a perpetual succession of those very minute corpuscles which are separated from the rest by attrition; these minute corpuscles to have been in the same manner still further diminished, and as they decrease in quantity to increase in velocity, and to have been driven in every oblique direction by the first order of particles, which continue in their direct course. Hence two elements of things would arise; the first, that matter which is divided into indefinitely small corpuscles, of form adapted to fill up all possible vacuity; the second, that which is divided into minute spherical particles, of a determinate quantity. To these may be added a third, having parts more gross, or figures less fitted for motion. From the first element, the sun and fixed stars; from the second, the heavens; and from the third, the earth with the other planets, and the comets, may be supposed to have been formed, subject to certain fixed laws of nature. The motion of the celestial globes produces a continual action upon the particles of the third element, which is the cause of various effects on the terrestrial globe, and among the rest of gravity.

The principles of *Morals*,³⁰ Des Cartes deduced from the physical nature of the passions. His doctrine on this subject is:—

³⁰ De passionibus animæ.

Whatever happens, is called passion, with respect to the subject to which it happens; and action, with respect to that which causes it to happen. Nothing acts upon the mind more immediately than the body to which it is joined; whence what is passion in the mind, is action in the body. Heat, and the motion of the limbs, proceed from the body, and thoughts, from the mind; but the mind cannot give motion and heat to the body. The more vivid and subtile parts of the blood, which heat rarefies in the heart, are incessantly entering into the cavities of the brain, and form animal spirits, which are in the brain separated from other less subtile parts of the blood. These animal spirits, which are corporeal, excited as by the soul itself, so also by the action of external objects upon the senses, are the immediate cause of all the original motions of the body. Whence all the limbs may be moved by means of the objects of sense, and the animal spirits, without any action of the soul. Nothing is to be attributed to the soul but thoughts: and these are of two kinds; active, or volition, including desire and aversion; and passive, including intelligence, perception, and feeling or passion.

The soul is united to all the parts of the body, but its chief functions are exercised in the pineal gland of the brain, where it receives notice of the impressions made upon the senses, and whence it sends forth animal spirits through the nerves, which put the muscles into motion. The passions are feelings of the soul, produced and continued by the action of the animal spirits; the chief effect of the passions is, to excite the soul to volition. All volition is in its nature free, and consists in causing the gland, with which it is intimately connected, to move in that manner which is most suitable to produce an effect corresponding to the volition. Judgment comprehends not only the perception of the understanding, but the assent of the will, and it is from the abuse of its natural liberty of assenting or not assenting to a proposition that error springs. The soul, in the act of recollection, exercises a volition by means of which the pineal gland inclines itself successively this way and that way, and impels the animal spirits to different parts of the brain, till that part is found upon which the object which we wish to recollect has left traces.

The soul of man, which is one, is both sensitive and rational; and the conflict between its inferior and superior parts is nothing else but a struggle between the motions which the body, by means of its animal spirits, and the soul, by its own volition, are at the same time endeavouring to excite in the pineal gland. By the result of this contest, every one may judge of the strength or weakness of his soul. The soul acquires the dominion over the body by means of firm and clear decisions concerning good and evil, produced by the contemplation of truth, which it determines to follow without suffering itself to be seduced by present passion. The passions belong to the body, and are to be imputed to the soul only as it is united to the body. Their use is, to excite the mind to exert those volitions which are necessary to the preservation or perfection of the body, and the attainment of that which is in its nature good. All the passions are useful, and only become injurious by excess. The general remedy against the excess of the passions is, to consider all the appearances which they present to the imagination as deceitful, and to postpone volition and action till the commotion which they have excited in the blood is appeased, or, where immediate action is necessary, to follow reason in opposition to passion. Since nothing beyond our own thoughts is absolutely in our own power, it is wiser to endeavour to subdue ourselves than fortune, and to change our own desires than the order of the world.

Animals are not only destitute of reason, but probably of all thought, and perform their various functions as mere *automata*, excited to motion only by means of animal spirits, which act upon the nerves and muscles.

This last extravagant opinion Des Cartes has been suspected of borrowing from a Spanish writer, Gomes Peirera, by whom it was maintained in his *Margarita Antoniana*; but it is more probable that it was a conclusion originally deduced from his notion of the animal spirits in the economy of human nature.

Although some parts of the Cartesian system appear to have been derived from the Grecian philosophy; particularly the notion of innate ideas, and of the action of the soul upon the body, from Plato; the doctrine of a *plenum*

from Aristotle; and the elements of the doctrine of vortices from the Atomic school of Democritus and Epicurus; Des Cartes must, nevertheless, be confessed to have discovered great subtlety and depth of thought, as well as fertility of imagination, and to have merited a distinguished place among the improvers of philosophy. But his labours would have been more valuable, had he not suffered himself to be led astray into the romantic regions of hypothesis, by the false notion, that the nature of things may be better understood by endeavouring to account for appearances from hypothetical principles, than by inferring general principles from an attentive observation of appearances. His fondness for hypothesis led him to confound the ideas of attribute and substance, as in his definition of matter and space; and those of possibility and probability, as in his doctrine of vortices. Even his celebrated argument for the existence of God (which by the way, was maintained before his time by the Scholastic Anselm) confounds the idea of an infinite being with the actual existence of that being, and substitutes a mere conception of the meaning of a term, in the place of the idea of a being really and substantially existing. Hence, though Des Cartes is by no means to be ranked among the enemies of religion, as he was by many of his bigotted contemporaries; though it be even true, that his whole system is built upon the knowledge of God, and supposes his agency, it must nevertheless be regretted, that, in establishing the doctrine of Deity, he forsook the clear and satisfactory ground of final causes, and had recourse to a subtle argument, which few can comprehend, and with which fewer still will be fully satisfied.

The system of Des Cartes, notwithstanding its defects, had so much subtlety, ingenuity, and originality, that it not only engaged the universal attention of the learned, but long continued, in the midst of all the opposition which is met with from the professed enemies of innovation, to be zealously defended by many able writers, and to be publicly taught in the schools, throughout all Europe. Till at length, when the more sober method of philosophizing, introduced by Lord Bacon, began to be generally adopted, and the fabrications of romantic theories gave way to the

experimental study of nature, the system of Des Cartes, like "the baseless fabric of an air-vision," has disappeared, and has scarcely "left a wreck behind."²¹

SECT. VII.

Of Godfred William Leibnitz.

WHAT Des Cartes undertook in France was at the same time attempted in Germany by Leibnitz, a distinguished ornament of his age and country.

*Godfred William Leibnitz*²² was born at Leipsic, in the year 1646. He was the son of a learned professor of morals in the university of that city. In his childhood, such was his thirst after learning, that, not contented with the daily instruction of his preceptors, he frequently withdrew into his father's study to read the ancients. Livy and Virgil were his favourite authors: and he was so intimately conversant with the latter, that, even when he was an old man, he could repeat from memory almost the whole of his poems. This early and assiduous attention to classical learning, laid the foundation of that correct and elegant taste which appears in all his writings. At fifteen years of age, Leibnitz became a student in the university of Leipsic, where, under the direction of able masters, he prosecuted with unusual success the various studies of law, medicine, philosophy, and theology, and made himself well acquainted with many eminent writers in each. In the

²¹ Vidend. P. Daniel Iter Cartes. per Mund. p. i. p. 14. Kortholt. Bp. Leibn. v. iii. Thomas Hist. Sap. t. ii. p. 114. Spanhem. ep. de Novisa. Dissid. in Belgio. Pfaff. Hist. Lit. Theol. P. ii. p. 209. Sagittar. Intr. Hist. Eccl. P. i. p. 925. P. ii. p. 627. Benthem. Stat. Eccl. Schol. Bat. p. ii. c. 4. Cudworth Int. Syst. c. v. § 1. Parker Disp. iii. de Deo. p. 221. vi. p. 489. Huet. de Rebus suis, l. vi. p. 162. Huet. Mem. pour Cartesisme. Rapin. Reflex. § 23. Ritter de Religione Cartesii. Petermanni Vind. Phil. Cart. Lips. 1704. Alberti Diss. de Cart. et Loecuanism. Monmor. Diss. de Physique de M. de Cartes, 1716.

²² Elogie de Leibnitz par Pontenelle. Guntheri Ludovici Hist. Phil. Leibnizian. Lips. 1737, 8vo. Fabric. Hist. Bibl. sue, v. i. p. 317. Reimann. Hist. Lit. Ger. p. iii. p. 576. p. iv. p. 147. p. v. p. 262. Stollii Hist. Lit. p. ii. c. i. Nicéron. Mem. t. ii. p. 64.

university of Jena, where he finished his academical studies, the principal objects of his attention were history, law, and mathematics. On his return home, he continued to study philosophy, particularly in the writings of Plato and Aristotle, whom he endeavoured to reconcile. In 1666, he took his degree in philosophy, and in the public disputations upon this occasion, displayed uncommon ability. He published, the same year, his *Ars Combinatoria*, "Combinatory Art;" a work intended to shew in what manner universal arithmetic may be applied to the elucidation of other sciences. This piece was accompanied with "A Mathematical Demonstration of the Existence of God." Though this early production was not entirely approved by his own more mature judgment, it bore evident marks of an inventive genius.

In the midst of his philosophical and mathematical speculations, Leibnitz had never neglected the study of jurisprudence; and he made himself so perfectly master of this science, that, in 1668, he published his *Nova Methodus docendæ discendæque Jurisprudentiæ*,³³ "New Method of teaching and learning Jurisprudence," which gained him great applause, and introduced him to the notice of the Elector of Mentz, by whom he was employed in affairs of state. Still, however, he persevered in his philosophical inquiries; and when he found it in vain to attempt to collect any consistent system from former philosophers, he determined to exercise his own invention in framing a new hypothesis. This first effort of his philosophical genius produced a work, entitled *Theoria Motus Concretæ*, "A Theory of Concrete Motion," inscribed to the Royal Society in London; the principles of which were further explained in another work, *Theoria Motus Abstracti*, "The Theory of Abstract Motion," inscribed to the French Academy of Sciences. The solution of the *phenomena* of nature, proposed in these treatises, the author afterwards abandoned for his doctrine of Monads.

The mathematical speculations of Leibnitz were original and profound. During a visit which he made at Paris in 1672, he gave such proofs of his eminent skill in the higher geometry, as excited the general admiration of the French

³³ Francof. 12mo.

mathematicians. A royal pension was offered him if he would remain in France: but his attachment to the Protestant religion induced him to decline the proposal. Going over, at this time, into England, he formed an acquaintance with several eminent philosophers, and among the rest with Newton. Upon the death of his patron, the Elector of Mentz, he returned into Germany, and was admitted into the service of Frederic Duke of Brunswick Lunenburg. After another visit to his mathematical friends in France and England, he settled at Hanover, and became a member of the Duke's Aulic Council. In this situation, his civil labours did not prevent his philosophical lucubrations. It was at the beginning of the year 1677, that he first mentioned his mathematical invention of *Differentials* to Newton, who had just before written to Leibnitz an account of his own invention of *Fluxions*. He also, about the same time, brought to light some discoveries which he had made in mechanics and chemistry. His *Notitia Opticæ Promote*, "Hints of Improvement in Optics," relates a new method of polishing optical glasses, on which subject he corresponded with Spinoza, who was an excellent optician. Memoirs of experiments and observations made by Leibnitz on various subjects in natural philosophy are preserved in the Leipsic Journal, entitled, *Acta Eruditorum*, "Works of the Learned," in which, from the year 1683, he had a considerable share. One of his most valuable pieces, preserved in this periodical work, is his "Thoughts on Knowledge, Truth, and Ideas."

Whilst Leibnitz was employed in collecting, at the request of the Duke of Lunenburg, materials for a history of the House of Brunswick, he availed himself of the opportunities which his journies on this business afforded him, for enlarging his knowledge of nature and the arts. Upon his return, he pursued with indefatigable industry, several objects of entirely different kinds: he engaged in further mathematical and philosophical researches; he maintained a theological dispute with Pellisson; and he wrote an important work on the Law of Nations, entitled, *Codex Juris Gentium diplomaticus*. No sooner was this elaborate treatise finished, than he applied his thoughts to the great design of renovating the science of metaphysics, and particu-

larly of correcting and improving the philosophical notion of substance, as the means of arriving, in the most simple way, at the knowledge of nature. With this view he wrote his treatise *De ipsa Natura sive Vi insita*, "On Nature itself, or the Innate Force." He, moreover, conceived the idea of a new science of forces, in which the laws of mechanics, and the measure of living forces might be clearly defined. Of this science, which he called Dynamics, he inserted a specimen in the *Acta Eruditorum*.

In 1695, Leibnitz published, in the *Parisian Journal*, a specimen of a new system of the nature and communication of substances, and of the union between body and mind; in which he unfolded his notion of a pre-established harmony between the body and soul of man, which afterwards so much engaged the attention of philosophers. About the same time he wrote his "Thoughts on Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding;" in which he controverts that philosopher's opinions on Innate Ideas, Substance, a Vacuum, and other subjects; communicated to the world his ingenious mathematical invention of the Arithmetical Binary; and wrote a Reply to Bayle, in defence of his doctrine of Pre-established Harmony.

It was by means of the laudable exertions of Leibnitz, that an Academy of Sciences was instituted at Berlin. He attempted to introduce similar institutions in Dresden, Vienna, and Petersburg. In the two former places, through the commotions of war, the attempt proved abortive; but at Petersburg, the Emperor Peter carried this useful plan into execution, and rewarded the projector with a liberal pension.

In the midst of these engagements, Leibnitz found leisure to complete a work, in which he explained more fully than he had before done the principles of his new system. It was entitled, "*Theodicea*, or a Dissertation on the Goodness of God, the Liberty of Man, and the Origin of Evil."³⁴ He also maintained an extensive correspondence with learned men and philosophers; of which a valuable specimen is preserved in a collection of letters which pass-

³⁴ Vid. Ed. Gottshedii cum Annot. et Gall. Edit. Amstelod. 1734. cum Vita Auctoris a L. de Neufville.

ed between Leibnitz and Newton, Clark, and others, on topics of philosophy, natural religion, and mathematics.³⁵

These various and important labours were often interrupted by violent attacks of the gout and the stone; till at length, rather exhausted by acute pain than worn out by age or labour, this great man expired in the seventieth year of his age.

Leibnitz may justly be ranked among those universal geniuses, who at once surprise and benefit the world. With wonderful strength of understanding, an excellent faculty of invention, and a most capacious and retentive memory, he united an uncommon degree of industry. He frequently spent a great part of the night, as well as the day, in reading; and has been known to pass whole months in his study, without allowing himself any unnecessary avocations. Hence he was enabled not only to acquire much general knowledge, but to become eminent in attainments of various kinds. The improvements which he made in the higher geometry and algebra, particularly his method of subjecting indefinitely small quantities to calculation, called his *Calculus Differentialis*, rank him in the first class of mathematicians. He was intimately conversant with the doctrines of philosophy, both ancient and modern, and cast new light upon almost every branch of knowledge, particularly on the first principles of science, on which his speculations were profound. In theology, he was well read in the writings of the Christian Fathers, and in the polemics of his own times. On history and jurisprudence, he wrote with a degree of accuracy and solidity, which might lead the reader to suppose these subjects to have been his chief study. With all this, his attainments in the knowledge of antiquity, in philology, and polite literature, were such as to entitle him to the character of an elegant scholar, as sufficiently appears from his Latin and French poems, and his Letters on Miscellaneous Subjects. This great man had, however, his imperfections; among which we must reckon his fondness for the conjectural method of philosophizing, and the facility with which he admitted hypotheses unsupported by induction and experiment.

³⁵ *Epistolæ Leibn.* Edit. a Kortholt. Lips. 1742. iv. vol. Clarke on the Being and Attributes of God, Lond. 1717. 8vo.

Although Leibnitz wrote an entire system of philosophy, a summary of his metaphysical tenets may be collected from his *Theodicea*, his treatise "On the Principles of Philosophy," his "Thoughts on Knowledge," &c. and his "Cause of God asserted." They are as follow :

A Monad is a simple substance without parts. The existence of Monads must be admitted, since without these no compound or aggregate of simple substances could exist. These simple substances are properly called Monads, because, as unity is the fountain and origin of numbers, and comprehends all their powers, so simple substances are the matter, of which all corporeal masses are formed. Since Monads have no parts, they have neither extension, figure, nor divisibility. They are the true atoms of nature, and elements of things, incapable of destruction, except by the power of God. Each Monad differs from every other; for, it is impossible that any two things should be found in nature perfectly alike.

Monads have an internal principle of alteration, by means of which they are continually varying in a certain manner; whence arises a plurality of properties and relations. This perpetually varying state, which involves and represents multitude in unity, is Perception, which is not, however, to be confounded with Consciousness. The action of the eternal principle of Monads, by which a transition is made from one perception to another, may be called Appetite. The perception and appetite of Monads are not to be explained mechanically by figure and motion, because they are affections of a simple substance without parts. In Monads, therefore, nothing is found but perception and appetite: and in this respect all Monads may be said to partake of the nature of soul; although that term is more properly applied to those living beings which have distinct perception united with memory. The present state of Monads arises from the past, and perception from perception, as motion from motion. Monads are in a state of perception similar to that of a mind in a stupor, which has a perpetual succession of minute and indistinct perceptions.

Nature, by granting organs to animals, has made them capable of distinct perception, memory, and imagina-

tion. Man is distinguished from inferior animals by the power of knowing necessary and eternal truths. It is by this power that we are capable of those reflex acts, by which we are conscious of our own existence, and from the ideas of being, substance, and God.

Our reasonings are raised upon two great principles; the one, that of Consistency, by means of which we judge that to be false which involves a contradiction, and that to be true which is the reverse of the false; the other, that of Sufficient Reason, which admits nothing to exist without a sufficient reason of its existence, though that reason may not be known to us. Of contingent truths or facts, a sufficient reason must be found, which may be traced up through a series of preceding contingencies, till they ultimately terminate in a necessary substance, which is a sufficient reason of the whole series of changes, and with which the whole series is connected.

This supreme substance, which is sole, universal, and necessary, since every thing external, by the supposition, depends upon it, cannot be capable of limit, and must contain within itself the principle of every possible reality. God is supremely perfect, and the source of all existence and perfection. He is, moreover, the fountain of all possible essences; these, depending on the existence of a necessary being, in whom possible essence includes existence. It is true of God alone, that if his existence be possible he must necessarily exist; and since nothing external can make it impossible, and the supposition involves no contradiction, the existence of God is on this ground demonstrably established.

Besides this demonstration of the Being of God *à priori*, it may also be proved *à posteriori*; for contingent things exist, which can have no sufficient reason of existence but in a necessary being, which has within itself the reason of its own existence. Eternal truths depend upon God, not arbitrarily, but necessarily.

God alone is primitive unity, or simple original substance, from whom are produced all created or derived Monads. These owe their existence to the effusion of the rays of Divinity, limited in their effects by the finite capacity of the creatures who receive them. Creatures have

not proceeded necessarily from the Divine Essence, but have been created, according to the plan of the Divine understanding, by the energy of the Divine will and power; and their continued preservation is a continual creation.

Monads have universally an influence upon each other, and are reciprocally active and passive. They are active, in proportion as their perceptions are distinct; passive, as they are confused. In simple substances, the influence of one Monad upon another is not mechanical, but ideal, and is not effectual without the intervention of the Deity, who directs them according to the ideas of his own intellect.

The Deity is always determined in his choice by sufficient reason; and this can only be found in the degrees of perfection of possible worlds. His wisdom knows, his goodness chooses, and his power produces the best possible world.

From the universal influence of all creatures upon each individual, and of each upon all, it follows, that every simple substance receives an impression or image of all the rest, and becomes, as it were, a perpetual living mirror of the universe. As the same city viewed from different places appears different, and is optically multiplied; so it happens, that, in consequence of the infinite multitude of simple substances in nature, pictures of the universe are multiplied without end, according to the different points of sight of different Monads. By this means, all possible variety, and consequently all possible perfection, is produced in the universe. Since there is in nature a universal *plenum*, the motion of any body or composition of Monads must affect every other body by means of intervening bodies; and every present motion will have a necessary connexion with every future motion: whence he who sees all things, can read in the present whatever will happen in any future time or distant place.

Although each created Monad reflects the whole universe, that Monad which is the animating principle of any body reflects that body more distinctly than all others. As the body reflects the whole universe by the connexion of all matter *in pleno*, so also the soul reflects the whole universe, while it reflects that organized body, by which it is

in a peculiar manner perceived, and with which it forms a living animal.

Since matter is not only infinitely divisible, but is actually divided without limit, every portion of matter may be conceived to be a world of living creatures; and every part of a living body to be itself full of other living bodies. All bodies are like rivers, perpetually flowing; some parts entering, and others passing away. The soul changes its body, not instantaneously, but by degrees, so that strictly speaking there is no such thing as death, or a state in which the soul is separated from the body. In conception, no new animal is produced; but a pre-existing animal is disposed to a transformation, by which it passes into another species. In death, though the machine in part perishes, the animal itself remains indestructible.

In the united state of soul and body, each follows its own laws; but they agree together by means of a *Pre-established Harmony* between all substances, which renders each a representation of the universe. The soul acts according to the law of final causes, or by motives; the body, according to efficient causes, or by motion: and between these two kingdoms of nature there is an harmony, originally established and continually preserved by the power of God, in consequence of which, whilst body and mind follow their respective laws without interruption, the body effects what the mind dictates, and both conspire to preserve the order of nature. As souls in general are mirrors of animated beings, spirits, which partake of the nature of divinity, are images of the Author of nature, and hence are capable of intercourse with the Deity, as subjects with a prince, or as children with a parent. Thus the World of Spirits constitutes the city of God; a kingdom the most perfect under a perfect monarch.

From this metaphysical theory, which must be confessed too hypothetical to afford entire satisfaction, Leibnitz deduced many dogmas respecting the Divine Nature and operations, the nature of human actions, good and evil, natural and moral, and other subjects, which he treats with great subtlety, and in a connected train of reasoning. But for the particulars of these, we must refer the reader to his works, particularly the treatise entitled *Causa Dei asserta*.

It will be easily perceived, that the Monads of Leibnitz approach nearer to the permanent Intelligible Natures, called by Pythagoras Numbers, and by Plato Ideas, than to the solid and indivisible Atoms of Epicurus. Our philosopher's *sufficient reason*, without which nothing can exist, though easily confounded with, is in truth different from, a *necessary cause*; and a due attention to this distinction is of importance in the question concerning liberty and necessity, so ably canvassed in the memorable controversy between Leibnitz and Clarke.—The doctrine of a pre-established harmony between body and soul, was an ingenious attempt towards the solution of the perplexing question concerning the connexion between matter and spirit. Aware of the difficulties attending the opinion of the physical influence or action of substances totally dissimilar upon each other, Leibnitz had recourse to the idea of an harmony, originally established by the Creator, between the series of physical and moral events; by means of which, while each follows its own laws, the ends of the Divine government with respect to both are accomplished. To this doctrine it has been objected, by Newton and others, that it supposes a perpetual miracle. But it is not our business to decide these controversies; our undertaking only requires that we mention them.*

SECT. VIII.

Of Christian Thomas.

AMONG the Germans, who have attempted the general improvement of philosophy, some degree of praise is due to Christian Thomas, who, not without obloquy and hazard, threw off the Sectarian yoke, and introduced Eclectic freedom into the German schools.

* Vidend. Ludovici Hist. Phil. Leibnitz. Langii Receptio Script. Anti-Leibn. Script. adv. Phil. Wolf. Hal. 1725. Ephem. Lips. et Paris, et Baylii et Basnagii. Act. Erud. 1683. Act. Erud. t. vii. Supp. xi. p. 561. Recueil des Pieces de Phil. t. ii. p. 216. Hansii Princip. Phil. Leibnitz. Voltairii Compar. Metaph. Leibn. et Newton. 1741. Des Maiseaux Pref. Coll. Gallic. Diss. Clarkii et Leibnizii.

*Christian Thomas*³⁶ was born at Leipsic, in 1655, and was well educated, first under his father, and afterwards in the Leipsic university. At first he acquiesced in the established doctrines of the schools; but, upon reading Puffendorf's "Apology for rejecting the Scholastic Principles of Morals and Law," light suddenly burst upon his mind, and he determined to renounce all implicit deference to ancient dogmas. He read lectures upon the subject of Natural Law, first from the text of Grotius, and afterwards from that of Puffendorf, freely exercising his own judgment, and where he saw reason advancing new opinions. Whilst his father was living, paternal prudence and moderation restrained the natural vehemence and acrimony of the young man's temper, which was too apt to break out, even in his public lectures. But when he was left to himself, the boldness with which he advanced unpopular tenets, and the severity with which he dealt out his satirical censures, soon brought upon him the violent resentment of theologians and professors.

An "Introduction to Puffendorf," which Thomas published in the year 1687, wherein he deduced the obligation of morality from natural principles, occasioned great offence. The following year he became still more unpopular, by opening a monthly literary journal, which he entitled "Free Thoughts; or, Monthly Dialogues on various Books, chiefly new;" in which he attacked many of his contemporaries with great severity. The raillery of this satirical work was too provoking to be endured: complaints were lodged before the Ecclesiastical Court of Dresden; the bookseller was called upon to give up the author; and it was only through the interest of the Mareschal that Thomas escaped punishment. The title of the work was now changed; but its spirit remained. A humorous and satirical Life of Aristotle, and several other sarcastic papers, kept alive the flame of resentment, till at length it again burst forth, on a charge brought against him before the same court by the clergy of Leipsic for contempt of religion; but he defended himself with such ability, that none of his adversaries chose to reply, and the matter was dropped.

³⁶ Leporin. Germ. Lit. p. ii. Program. Jurisp. Div. Proem. Causæ Jurid. p. iii. n. 1. 7. et præf. Libr. ejus.

A satirical review, which he wrote, of a treatise "On the Divine Right of Kings," published by a Danish divine; "A Defence of the Sect of the Pictists," and other eccentric and satirical publications, at last inflamed the resentment of the clergy against Thomas to such a degree, that he was threatened with imprisonment. To escape the storm which thickened about him, he entreated permission from the Elector of Brandenburg, in whose court he had several friends, that he might read private lectures in the city of Hall. This indulgence being obtained, Thomas became a voluntary exile from Leipsic. After a short interval, he was appointed public professor of jurisprudence, first in Berlin, and afterwards at Hall. In these situations, he found himself at full liberty to indulge his satirical humour, and to engage in the controversies of the times: and, as long as he lived, he continued to make use of this liberty in a manner which subjected him to much odium. At the same time, he persevered in his endeavours to correct and subdue the prejudices of mankind, and to improve the state of philosophy. He died at Hall, in the year 1728.

Besides the satirical journal already mentioned, Thomas wrote several treatises on Logic, Morals, and Jurisprudence; in which he advanced many dogmas contrary to received opinions. In his writings on physics, he leaves the ground of experiment and rational investigation, and appears among the Mystics. His latter pieces are in many particulars inconsistent with the former. His principal philosophical works are "An Introduction to Aulic Philosophy, or Outlines of the Art of Thinking and Reasoning;"³⁷ "Introduction to Rational Philosophy;" "A Logical Praxis;"³⁸ "Introduction to Moral Philosophy;"³⁹ "A Cure for Irregular Passions, and the Doctrine of Self-Knowledge;"⁴⁰ "The new Art of discovering the secret Thoughts of Men;" "Divine Jurisprudence;" "Foundations of the Law of Nature and Nations;" "Dissertation on the Crime of Magic;" "Essay on the Nature and Essence of Spirit, or Principles of Natural and Moral Science;"⁴¹ "History of Wisdom and Folly."

We shall subjoin a brief specimen of the more peculiar tenets of this bold, eccentric, and inconsistent philosopher.

³⁷ Lips. 1688. ³⁸ Hal. 1691. ³⁹ 1692. ⁴⁰ 1696. ⁴¹ 1699.

Thought arises from images impressed upon the brain; and the action of thinking is performed in the whole brain. Brutes are destitute of sensation. Man is a corporeal substance, capable of thinking and moving, or endued with intellect and will. Man does not always think. Truth is the agreement of thought with the nature of things. The senses are not deceitful, but all fallacy is the effect of precipitation and prejudice. From perceptions arise ideas, and their relations; and from these, reasonings. It is impossible to discover truth by the syllogistic art. No other rule is necessary in reasoning, than that of following the natural order of investigation; beginning from those things which are best known, and proceeding, by easy steps, to those which are more difficult.

Perception is a passive affection, produced by some external object, either in the intellectual sense, or in the inclination of the will. Essence is that without which a thing cannot be perceived. God is not perceived by the intellectual sense, but by the inclination of the will: for creatures affect the brain; but God, the heart. All creatures are in God: nothing is exterior to him. Creation is extension produced from nothing by the Divine power. Creatures are of two kinds, passive and active; the former is matter; the latter, spirit. Matter is dark and cold, and capable of being acted upon by spirit, which is light, warm, and active. Spirit may subsist without matter, but desires a union with it. All bodies consist of matter and spirit, and have therefore some kind of life. Spirit attracts spirit, and thus sensibly operates upon matter united to spirit. This attraction in man is called love; in other bodies, sympathy. A finite spirit may be considered as a limited sphere, in which rays, luminous, warm, and active, flow from a centre. Spirit is the region of the body to which it is united. The region of finite spirits is God. The human soul is a ray from the Divine Nature; whence it desires union with God, who is love. Since the essence of spirit consists in action, and of body in passion, spirit may exist without thought: of this kind are light, ether, and other active principles in nature.

Good consists in the harmony of other things with man and his several powers. The highest felicity of man con-

sists in tranquil delight. The fountain of this delight is the rational love of man and of God. Internal love and reverence are all the homage which nature teaches us to pay to God. With respect to God the two capital errors are atheism and superstition. Superstition is worse than atheism. The love of God is a supernatural affection, which prepares the soul for future felicity. The rational love of man comprehends all social virtues. Rational self-love includes self-preservation, temperance, purity, industry, fortitude. To wise men, virtue is its own reward. Laws are appointed for the sake of fools, to conduct them to internal tranquillity, and external peace. Of fools, there are three classes—those who disturb external peace; those who do nothing to promote it; and those who do not enjoy internal peace. The first have need of authority; the second of authority and counsel; the third of counsel alone. The obligation of authority and law extends only to external actions, which are just when they are conformable to law; justice is therefore to be distinguished from virtue, which respects the internal man, and requires a conformity to the law of nature.

These specimens of the philosophy of Thomas discover some originality of thought, but contain too many hasty and ill-founded positions, and breathe too much of the spirit of Mysticism, to merit any considerable share of attention. The author principally deserves notice in this work, on account of the boldness with which he threw off the yoke of ancient authority, and the perseverance with which, in the midst of much opposition, and many vicissitudes of fortune, he maintained and exercised the right of free inquiry.*

SECT. IX.

Of Christian Wolfe.

No philosopher has been more generally or justly celebrated in Germany than *Christian Wolfe*,* born at Breslau, in the year 1679.

* Vidend. Schurtzleisch, Ep. Arc. 379. Juncker de Ephemerid, Erid. c. 17. Bayle Lettres, t. iii. p. 446. Stollii Lit. Hist. p. iii. c. 5. § 30. Hollman Theol. Nat. c. 1. § 19. p. 79.

* Pinacotheca Script. illust. Dec. i. ii. x. Gottschedii Elog. Wolf. 1755. Hal. 4to. Ludovici Hist. Phil. Wolf. Lengii Synops. Script.

After having been well instructed in the rudiments of learning and science in his own country, Wolfe prosecuted his studies successively in the universities of Jena, Hamburgh, and Leipsic. At the age of twenty-six, he had acquired so much distinction in the schools, that he was appointed professor of mathematics, and soon afterwards of philosophy in general, in the university of Hall; and science received considerable improvements from his researches.

After Leibnitz had published his *Theodicea*, Wolfe, struck with the novelty of the metaphysical edifice which that philosopher had raised, was ambitious of the honour of making some additions to the structure, and assiduously laboured in the investigation of new metaphysical truths. He also digested the Elements of Mathematics in a new method, and attempted an improvement of the art of reasoning, in a treatise "On the Powers of the Human Understanding." Upon the foundation of Leibnitz's doctrine of Monads, he formed a new system of Cosmology and Pneumatology, digested and demonstrated in a mathematical method. This work, entitled "Thoughts on God, the World, and the Human Soul," was published in the year 1719; to which were added, in a subsequent edition, "Heads of Ethics and Policy."

Wolfe was now rising towards the summit of philosophical reputation, when the opinion which he entertained on the doctrine of necessity being deemed by his colleagues inimical to religion; and an oration, which he delivered in praise of the morality of the Chinese having given much offence; an accusation of heresy was publicly brought against him in the university of Hall, and afterwards transferred to the courts of Berlin: and, though he attempted to justify himself in a treatise which he wrote on the subject of fatality, a royal mandate was issued, in November, 1723, requiring him to leave the Prussian dominions. Having been formerly invited by the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, to fill a professorial chair in the university of Cassel, Wolfe now put himself under the patronage of that prince, who had the liberality to afford him a secure asylum, and appointed him professor of mathematics and philosophy.

The question concerning the grounds of the censure

which had been passed upon Wolfe, was now every where freely canvassed; almost every German university was inflamed with disputes on the subject of liberty and necessity; and the names of Wolfians and Anti-Wolfians were every where heard. After an interval of nine years, the current of public opinion turned in favour of Wolfe, and the King of Prussia reversed his sentence of exile, and appointed him vice-chancellor of the university of Hall; where his return was welcomed with every expression of triumph. From this time he was employed in completing his institutes of philosophy, which he lived to accomplish in every branch except policy. In 1745, he was created a Baron by the Elector of Bavaria, and succeeded Ludowig in the office of chancellor of the university. He continued to enjoy these honours till the year 1754, when he expired.

Wolfe possessed a clear and methodical understanding, which by long exercise in mathematical investigations, was particularly fitted for the employment of digesting the several branches of knowledge into regular systems; and his fertile powers of invention enabled him to enrich almost every field of science, in which he laboured, with some valuable additions. The lucid order which appears in all his writings, enables his reader to follow his conceptions, with ease and certainty, through the longest trains of reasoning. But the close connexion of the several parts of his works, together with the vast variety and extent of the subjects on which he treats, renders it impracticable to give a summary of his doctrines.*

* Vidend. Wolf. Declar. de Scriptis prop. Rothfischer. Victoria Veritatis Nov. Lit. Lips. 1723. Formey Eloges des Académ. de Berlin, t. ii. Elogium Historicum de Wolf. Hal. 1755.

CHAP. III.

OF MODERN ECLECTIC PHILOSOPHERS WHO HAVE ATTEMPTED IMPROVEMENTS IN PARTICULAR BRANCHES OF PHILOSOPHY.

SECT. I.

Of Modern Attempts to improve Dialectics and Metaphysics.

AMONG the moderns who have renounced implicit respect for ancient authority, and, upon the true Eclectic plan of gathering up wisdom from every quarter, have attempted to enlarge the boundaries of human knowledge, besides those who have been, or have wished to be thought, reformers of universal philosophy, innumerable learned men have appeared, who have directed their attention towards the improvement of particular sciences. To take no notice of these, might be justly deemed a material defect in a general history of philosophy. At the same time it must be evident to every one who is tolerably acquainted with the philosophical world, that to give a distinct view of the modern state of every branch of science, would be in itself a task still more laborious than that which we have endeavoured to execute. Such a work would require, not only biographical memoirs of those writers who have distinguished themselves in each department, but a distinct delineation and accurate comparison of their various systems and opinions; an undertaking too extensive and important to be attempted at the close of the present work. The intelligent reader will therefore expect, in this chapter, nothing more than an enumeration of a few of the more singular and important facts, respecting the improvement of particular branches of philosophy, which occurred between the period of the revival of letters, and the commencement of the present century.

Although, about the time of the Reformation, many learned men, particularly Valla, Agricola, and Vives, spoke with great freedom of the defects of the Aristotelian *Logic*, no

one attempted to substitute a better in its stead, till Peter Ramus undertook the task, and executed it with a degree of courage and success, which has justly given his name considerable celebrity.

Peter Ramus, or De la Ramee,⁴³ who was born in 1515, in a village of Vermandois, was a servant in the college of Navarre at Paris. Here, by his own industry, he gathered up the rudiments of learning, and became acquainted with the logic of Aristotle. His talents and perseverance at last procured him a more honourable station in the college, and he became a candidate for the degree of master of philosophy. Upon this occasion he held a public disputation against the authority of Aristotle, in which he maintained his *thesis* with such ingenuity and ability as confounded his examiners. From this time Ramus determined to exert his utmost efforts to overturn the Aristotelian Logic, and to introduce a better method of reasoning. He wrote "*Animadversions upon Aristotle*," in which he inveighed with great vehemence against his *Organon*, and to which he subjoined new "*Institutes of Dialectics*."

These bold attacks upon a system which had for ages been universally admired, gave great offence, as might be expected, to the Peripatetics, and raised a violent storm of resentment against Ramus. At first his adversaries made use of no other weapons against him than those of logic and eloquence, sufficiently envenomed, however, with spleen and calumny. But they at length proceeded to harsher measures. A complaint was brought to the civil magistrate, in the name of the Academy, that Ramus, in opposing Aristotle, had committed open hostility against religion and learning. The affair engaged the public attention; and the king ordered, that Ramus and his chief antagonist, Antony Govea, should hold a public disputation, and that each party should choose two judges, and the king appoint an umpire. In the course of the contest, Ramus complained of unfair proceedings on the part of his antagonist; but could obtain no redress, for three of his judges were against him. The accusation was confirmed; the penalty

⁴³ *Vita scripta a Freigio, Nancelio, Ranosio, Sammarthano, Bayle. Latnois De Fort. Arist. c. 14. Galland. in Vit. Castellani, n. 4, 5. Thuanus ad Ann. 1572. Verulam Impet. Ph. v. iii. Op. p. 462.*

inflicted upon him was an entire prohibition to write or teach philosophy; and his enemies persecuted him with lampoons and satires, and even held him up to public ridicule upon the stage.

Ramus, however, did not long remain under disgrace. The following year, 1544, a plague happened in Paris, which dispersed the students of the university, and cut off several of the professors. On their return, Ramus, notwithstanding the royal prohibition, was recalled to his professorial chair; and in 1547 the sentence of Francis I. was reversed by Henry II. and Ramus was appointed Regius Professor of eloquence and philosophy, and afterwards of mathematics. Still, however, the embers of jealousy, though smothered, were not extinguished. They burst out into an open flame, as soon as it was known that Ramus favoured the party of the Hugonots; and he found it necessary to withdraw from the university. In the intervals of peace, he returned to his station; but, in the year 1568, when the civil war was a third time renewed, he resolved to leave France, and make a tour through Germany.

After spending three years in visiting the principal German universities, in which, notwithstanding the zealous endeavours of the Aristotelian professors to fortify the minds of the pupils against the doctrines of Ramus, much respect was shewn him, and many honours conferred upon him, he resolved, fatally for himself, to return into his own country. On the execrable day of St. Bartholomew's festival, in the tumult of the Parisian massacre, Charpentaire, a professor of mathematics, who had been eclipsed by the superior talents of Ramus, seized the opportunity of being revenged upon his rival, and, under the pretence of religion, employed assassins to murder him. The commission being executed, his body was thrown into the street to the enraged pupils of Charpentaire, who dragged it ignominiously along the streets, and threw it into the Seine. Such was the tragical end of Peter Ramus, who 'must be acknowledged to have deserved a better fate.

Few persons, in the present day, will be inclined to doubt whether Ramus did right in attempting to undermine the foundations of that authority which Aristotle had so long possessed in the schools: and no one, who will take

the trouble to examine the manner in which he laid open the defects and inconsistencies of the *Organon*, will hesitate in allowing him considerable merit in this part of his design. In attempting a new logical institute, Ramus was not, however, equally successful. The general outline of his plan is this :

Considering Dialectics as the art of deducing conclusions from premises, he endeavours to improve this art, by uniting it with that of rhetoric. Of the several branches of rhetoric, he considers invention and disposition as belonging equally to logic. Making Cicero his chief guide, he divides his treatise on Dialectics into two parts, the first of which treats of the invention of arguments, the second, of judgments. Arguments he derives not only from what the Aristotelians call middle terms, but from any kind of proposition, which, connected with another, may serve to prove any assertion. Of these he enumerates various kinds. Judgments he divides into axioms, or self-evident propositions, and *dianoëa*, or deductions by means of a series of arguments. Both these he divides into various classes ; and illustrates the whole by examples from the ancient orators and poets.

In the logic of Ramus,⁴⁴ many things are borrowed from Aristotle, and only appear under new names ; and many others are derived from other Grecian sources, particularly from the Dialogues of Plato, and the Logic of the Stoics. The author has the merit of turning the art of reasoning from the futile speculations of the schools to forensic and common use ; but his plan is defective, in confining the whole dialectic art to the single object of disputation, and in omitting many things which respect the general culture of the understanding and the investigation of truth. Notwithstanding the defects of his system, we cannot, however, subscribe to the severe censure which has been passed upon Ramus by Lord Bacon⁴⁵ and others ; for much is, we think, due to him ; for having with so much firmness and perseverance asserted the natural freedom of the human understanding.

⁴⁴ Conf. *Ars Cogitandi*. Gundling. *Via ad Verit.* P. i. p. 78. ⁴⁵ *Elswich De Fort. Arist. in Acad. Protest.* Walch. *Hist. Log.*

⁴⁶ *Augm. Scient.* l. vi. c. 2.

The logic of Ramus obtained great authority in the schools of Germany, Great Britain, Holland, and France; and long and violent contests arose between the followers of Ramus and those of the Stagyrte. These were not, however, sufficiently important in their consequences to require a distinct relation. The fame of Peter Ramus vanished before that of Des Cartes, whose labours in this branch of philosophy have been already noticed.

Among the modern innovators in Metaphysics, we must not omit to mention the well known name of *Spinoza*; a philosopher, who had the impious temerity to advance a new theory of nature destructive of all religion, which he pretended to establish by geometric demonstration.

Benedict de Spinoza,⁴⁶ born at Amsterdam, in 1632, was a Jew by descent and education; but very early discovered such dissatisfaction with the religion of his fathers, and advanced opinions so contrary to their established tenets, that a sentence of *anathema* was pronounced upon him by his brethren. Excommunicated from the synagogue, certain Christians, who were personally attached to him, granted him an asylum, and afforded him an opportunity of acquiring the knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages, and studying the Cartesian philosophy. The vehemence with which he continued to attack the religion of his countrymen alarmed and terrified them; and they attempted, first to bribe him to silence, by offering him an annual pension of a thousand florins, and afterwards to take him off by assassination. Both these measures proving ineffectual, they accused him before the magistrate of apostacy and blasphemy; and he was banished from the city.

In his exile, Spinoza studied mathematics and natural philosophy, and supported himself by the mechanical art of polishing optical glasses. His chief residence was at Rhenburg, where he was often visited by followers of Des Cartes, who came to consult him on difficult questions. At their request, he published, in 1664, "*The Principles of the Cartesian Philosophy demonstrated geometrically*," with an Appendix, in which he advanced metaphysical opinions wholly inconsistent with the doctrine of Des Cartes.

⁴⁶ Coler. Vit. Spinoz. Bayle. Niceron. T. xiii. p. 94. Basnage Hist. des Juifs, p. ix. c. 37.

To escape the odium which this publication drew upon him, he retired to a village not far from the Hague. Thither he was followed by many persons, both countrymen and foreigners, who were inclined to espouse his doctrines.

He was even invited by the Elector Palatine to fill the chair of philosophy at Heidelberg; but, from an apprehension that his liberty would in that situation be abridged, he declined the proposal. He lived in retirement, with great sobriety and decency of manners, till a consumption brought him to an early end, in 1677.

Spinoza, in his life-time, published, besides the work already mentioned, *Tractatum theologico-politicum*, "A Treatise theological and political." His "Posthumous Works," contain five treatises. 1. Ethics demonstrated geometrically. 2. Politics. 3. On the Improvement of the Understanding. 4. Epistles and Answers. 5. A Hebrew Grammar. The impieties contained in these treatises excited general indignation; and refutations were sent forth from various quarters, by writers of all religious persuasions, in which the empty sophisms, the equivocal definitions, the false reasonings, and all the absurdities of the writings of Spinoza, are fully exposed. The sum of his doctrine is this:

The essence of substance is, to exist. There is in nature only one substance, with two modifications, thought and extension. This substance is infinitely diversified, having within its own essence the necessary causes of the changes through which it passes. No substance can be supposed to produce or create another: therefore, besides the substance of the universe there can be no other; but all things are comprehended in it, and are modes of this substance, either thinking or extended.

This one universal substance, Spinoza calls God, and ascribes to it Divine attributes. He expressly asserts, that God is the immanent not the transitive cause of all things. His doctrine is, therefore, not to be confounded with that of those ancient philosophers, who held God to be *Tò πᾶν*, "The Universal Whole;" for according to them, the visible and intellectual worlds are produced by *emanation* from the eternal fountain of divinity; that is, by an expanding or unfolding of the Divine Nature, which was the effect of in-

telligence and design; whereas, in the system of Spinoza, all things are *immanent*, and necessary modifications of one universal substance, which, to conceal his atheism, he calls God. Nor can Spinozism be with any propriety derived, as some have imagined, from the Cartesian philosophy; for, in that system, two distinct substances are supposed; and the existence of Deity is a fundamental principle.

It may seem very surprising, that a man who certainly was not destitute of discernment, abilities, and learning, should have fallen into such impieties. And this could not have happened, had he not confounded his conceptions with subtle and futile distinctions concerning the nature of substance, essence, and existence, and neglected to attend to the obvious, but irrefragable argument for the existence of God, arising from the appearances of intelligence and design in all the productions of nature.

The impious system of Spinoza was maintained with so much ingenuity, that it found many patrons in the United Provinces, among whom were Lewis Meyer, who republished Spinoza's Works, and himself wrote a work entitled, "Philosophy the Interpreter of Scripture:" and Van Leenhof, an ecclesiastic of Zwoll, who wrote a piece entitled, "Heaven in Earth," of the doctrine of which he was obliged to make a public recantation. Others, under the pretence of refuting Spinoza, secretly favoured his system. But, against the poison of their impious tenets sufficient antidotes were soon provided by many able defenders of religion, whose writings are well known, particularly in Cudworth's "Intellectual System," the professed object of which is, the refutation of atheism.⁴⁷

A singular metaphysical hypothesis has given celebrity to the name of *Nicholas Mallebranche*,⁴⁸ who was born at Paris, in 1638. Devoting himself, at twenty-two years of age, to monastic life, he engaged in the study of ecclesiastical history and biblical criticism, but with so little satisfaction, that he was inclined to abandon his studies, and giving himself up wholly to devotion, to wait in silence for Divine illumination. Whilst he was in this perplexed state

⁴⁷ Jaenichen Hist. Spinoz. Leenhoff. Acta Phil. v. ii. p. 120. Mus. Bremen. v. ii. p. i. p. 145.

⁴⁸ Vie par Fontenelle dans l'Histoire de l'Ac. R. des Sciences, p. 206.

of mind, he happened to meet with Des Cartes' treatise "On Man," and found in it so much perspicuity, and so many new ideas, that he immediately determined to make himself perfectly master of the author's system of philosophy. From this time he immersed himself in profound meditation, and spent ten years in penetrating into the depths of the Cartesian philosophy, and in exploring new regions of metaphysics, not very remote from the precincts of enthusiasm. Having satisfied himself concerning the mysterious union of the soul and body, and having discovered, as he conceived, a still more mysterious union between the soul of man and God, he wrote his famous treatise, "On the Search after Truth." This work made its first appearance in 1673, and was, a little before the author's death, which happened in 1715, republished with considerable variations and enlargements.

The doctrine of this book, though in many respects original, is raised upon Cartesian principles, and is in some particulars Platonic. The author represents, in strong colours, the causes of error, arising from the disorders of the imagination and passions, the abuse of liberty, and an implicit confidence in the senses. He explains the action of the animal spirits; the nature of memory; the connexion of the brain with other parts of the body, and their influence upon the understanding and will. On the subject of intellect, he maintains, that thought alone is essential to mind, and deduces the imperfect state of science from the imperfection of the human understanding, as well as from the inconstancy of the will in inquiring after truth. Rejecting the ancient doctrine of *species* sent forth from material objects, and denying the power of the mind to produce ideas, he ascribes their production immediately to God, and asserts, that the human mind immediately perceives God, and sees all things in him. As he derives the imperfection of the human mind from its dependence upon the body, so he places its perfection in union with God, by means of the knowledge of truth and the love of virtue.⁴⁹

Singular and paradoxical as the notion of "Seeing all things in God," and some other dogmas of this writer, must

⁴⁹ Pritii Diss. de Enthusiasmo. Mallebr. Leibn. Rec. t. ii. p. 326.

have appeared, the work was written with such elegance and splendour of diction, and its tenets were supported by such ingenious reasonings, that it obtained general applause, and procured the author a distinguished name among philosophers, and a numerous train of followers. Its popularity might, perhaps, be in part owing to the appeal which the author makes to the authority of St. Augustine, from whom he professes to have borrowed his hypothesis concerning the origin of ideas. The immediate intercourse, which this doctrine supposes, between the human and the Divine Mind, has led some to remark a strong resemblance between the notions of Mallebranche and those of the sect called Quakers.

Attempts similar to those of Mallebranche, for the advancement of the knowledge of the human mind, were about the same time made in Germany by *Walter Tschirnhausen*,⁵⁰ a celebrated mathematician. A diligent inquirer after truth himself, he was desirous of furnishing others with a kind of first philosophy, which might conduct them with ease and certainty to wisdom and happiness. With this view, he wrote a work, entitled, *Medicina Mentis, sive Artis Inveniendi Præcepta generalia*,⁵¹ "The Medicine of the Mind, or general Precepts of the Art of Invention;" wherein he applied geometry and universal arithmetic to metaphysical and moral subjects, in hopes of opening a way by which any one might, for himself, discover what is true and useful. The work is properly a mathematical logic, more theoretical than practical, and only to be understood by such as are intimately conversant with mathematical speculations.

Among modern metaphysicians, the ancient questions concerning the human soul, its nature, its faculties, its duration, its connexion with the body, and the like, have been much debated. Many writers have maintained its materiality and natural mortality; among whom are *Coward*, in his "Thoughts on the Soul,"⁵² who was answered by *Broughton*, in his treatise "On the Nature of the Rational Soul," and by *Dodwell*, who maintained that the soul derives its immortality from the spirit of God in baptism.

⁵⁰ Vit Germanicé, Gorl. 1709. Fontenelle, l. c. t. ii.

⁵¹ Lips. 1695.

⁵² Lond. 1703.

Other writers have maintained a long, and still undecided controversy, concerning the freedom of the human mind; among whom are Leibnitz, Placette, King, Collins, and Clarke.⁵³

But the philosophy of the human mind has never been more ably investigated, than by the celebrated British metaphysician, *John Locke*,⁵⁴ who was born at Wrington, near Bristol, in the year 1632. He received the first part of his education at Westminster School, and became a student in Christ Church' College, Oxford, in 1651. The early produce of his genius promised a rich harvest; but his progress in knowledge was for a while retarded by the defects which he discovered in the established modes of education: his solid and penetrating judgment, little disposed to be satisfied with trifles, was disgusted with the unprofitable subtleties which occupied the schools. Despairing to find that intellectual light, for which he earnestly longed, in the chaos of Peripatetic and Scholastic philosophy, he grew tired of academic studies, and conversed more with men of wit and genius than with philosophers. The first writer who taught him to think it possible that the darkness which hung over the human intellect might be dispelled, was Des Cartes. Though he did not adopt his system, he was delighted with the perspicuity of his writings. He was now convinced that the general prevalence of error and uncertainty, was not so much owing to the imbecility of the human mind, as to the imperfection of the present method of instruction: his natural thirst after knowledge returned; and he resumed his inquiries with fresh ardour. He passed through a course of medical studies; but thinking it unsafe, on account of the delicate state of his health, to enter upon clinical practice, he declined taking his degree as doctor of physic.

In the year 1664, Locke, in order to improve his knowledge of human nature by an extensive acquaintance with mankind, accompanied the British ambassador to the court of Berlin. After remaining there a year he returned to Oxford, and chiefly pursued the study of natural philosophy. Here he had the good fortune to form an intimacy with Lord Ashley, afterwards Earl of Shaftesbury; a man of

⁵³ Bibl. Raisonné, t. iv. p. ii. p. 458.

⁵⁴ Vit. a Clerico, præf. Op.

superior genius, extensive reading, and elegant taste, from whose conversation Locke acknowledges himself to have derived great pleasure and advantage, and with whom he preserved an intimate friendship through life. He accompanied this nobleman both as his medical adviser and philosophical friend; and was introduced by him to the acquaintance of many persons of the first distinction, to whom his good sense, extensive knowledge, and polished manners, rendered him highly acceptable. In 1668, he attended the Earl of Northumberland into France. On his return, he undertook to superintend the education of Lord Shaftesbury's only son. It was in the leisure which he commanded during this engagement, that he digested his ideas concerning the powers and operations of the human understanding, and, at the request of his friends, committed his thoughts upon this subject to writing.

When his friend and patron was appointed lord chancellor, Locke shared his honours; and when, in the political struggles which threatened the destruction of the liberties of Great Britain, the Earl of Shaftesbury was dismissed from his office, Locke partook of his disgrace. In the year 1674, apprehending himself in danger of a consumption, by the advice and at the expense of his patron, he visited Montpellier, where he enjoyed the society of Mr. Herbert, afterwards Earl of Pembroke. On his return to England, an asthma obliged him to reside chiefly in the country; and he occupied his leisure in the study of the Scriptures, chiefly the New Testament. When Lord Shaftesbury retired into Holland, to escape the political storm which threatened his life, Locke, despairing of safety at home, followed him; and, in 1683, fixed his residence in Amsterdam, where he had frequent intercourse with Le Clerc, Limborch, and other learned men, and where, after many interruptions, he finished his "Essay on the Human Understanding." During his absence, his name, on account of the share which he was supposed to have in Lord Shaftesbury's political offences, was, by order of the king, struck out of the register of his College; and secret instructions were issued for seizing him, and bringing him back to England. Timely notice was, however, given him of his danger; and he remained in concealment among his

friends. During this recess, he wrote "Two Letters on Toleration," which he addressed to Limborch. In 1685, he was offered a pardon from James II. by William Penn; but he refused it upon the noble plea, that, having been guilty of no crime, he needed no pardon.

At the happy period of the Revolution, Locke accompanied the Princess of Orange to England, and was restored to the society of his numerous friends, and to his useful labours, political and philosophical. The "Essay on the Human Understanding" was first published in English in 1690, and was soon afterwards translated into French and Latin, and judiciously abridged by Wynn, Bishop of St. Asaph. The same year Locke published his treatise "On Civil Government," in which he boldly and successfully attacked the principles of despotism. The last days of his life he spent in retirement, at the country seat of his friend Sir Francis Masham, where he wrote his treatise "On Education;" "Third Letter on Toleration;" "Reasonableness of Christianity;" "Letters to Stillingfleet, Bishop of Worcester," and other tracts. In his theological works, he strenuously maintained, that there is nothing in the Christian religion contrary to reason: and at the same time that he shewed himself a true friend to the cause of revelation, was a zealous advocate for the doctrine of the unity of the Divine Nature. The last labours of this great and good man were employed upon the Scriptures; and it was whilst he found himself hastening to his end, that he finished his Commentaries upon the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, and Ephesians, published after his death, which happened in the year 1704. He died in a manner worthy of his excellent principles and character; and left a letter, to be delivered after his death to a friend, which concludes thus: "This life is a scene of vanity, which soon passes away, and affords no solid satisfaction, but in the consciousness of doing well, and the hopes of another."

That Locke possessed a noble and lofty mind, superior to prejudice, and capable, by its native energy, of exploring truth, even in regions of the intellectual world before unknown; that his judgment was accurate and profound; that his imagination was vigorous; and that he was well

furnished with the ornaments of elegant learning, were there no other proofs, might be without hesitation concluded from his great and immortal work, "The Essay on the Human Understanding;" in which, discarding all systematic theories, he has, from actual experience and observation, delineated the features, and described the operations of the human mind, with a degree of precision and minuteness, not to be found in Plato, Aristotle, or Des Cartes. After clearing the way by setting aside the whole doctrine of innate notions and principles, both speculative and practical, the author traces all ideas to two sources, sensation and reflection; treats at large of the nature of ideas, simple and complex; of the operation of the human understanding in forming, distinguishing, compounding, and associating them; of the manner in which words are applied as representations of ideas; of the difficulties and obstructions, in the search after truth, which arise from the imperfection of these signs; and of the nature, reality, kinds, degrees, casual hindrances, and necessary limits, of human knowledge.

To discuss at large the merits of this excellent work would require a distinct treatise. Suffice it to remark, that though several topics are treated of, which may be considered as episodical with respect to the main design; though many opinions which the author advances may admit of controversy; and though on some topics he may not have expressed himself with his usual perspicuity, and on others may be thought too verbose, the work is of inestimable value, as a history of the understanding, not compiled from former books, but written from materials collected by a long and attentive observation of what passes in the human mind. A small treatise, "On the Conduct of the Understanding," written by the same author, is a valuable supplement to his main work.

On the subject of logic, modern times have produced many treatises, which, either for novelty of matter, for perspicuity of arrangement, or for a free rejection of Peripatetic trifles, might deserve notice. Among these we must not omit particularly to mention the system of logic published under the name of the Society of Port Royal, which is commonly ascribed to Arnaud; "The Art of Thinking,"

by *Crousaz*; and the logic of the illustrious *Le Clerc*; a writer, to whom the learned world is under great obligations for many excellent works in various branches of learning, and whose name would have merited a conspicuous place in a general history of literature.

SECT. II.

Of Modern Attempts to improve Moral and Political Philosophy.

SCARCELY had philosophy emerged out of the darkness of barbarism, when learned men, tired of treading for ever the barren path of Scholastic controversy, began to visit the flowery and fertile fields of moral philosophy. Several of those writers, to whom the world is indebted for the revival of polite learning, wrote moral treatises after the manner of the ancients; among these were *Petrarch*, *Verger*, and *Cardan*.

But the first writer who treated the subject of ethics in the true Eclectic method, was *Michael de Montaigne*,⁵⁵ a native of Perigord, in France, who was born in 1530, and lived till 1592. The first language which was taught him was the Latin; which he could speak fluently at six years of age, when he knew nothing of the French tongue. He received his scientific education in the college of Guyenne. Though addicted to pleasure, he early formed a habit of reflection, which made him master of much originality of thought and diction. The fruits of Montaigne's lucubrations are preserved in his "*Essays*;"⁵⁶ consisting of miscellaneous observations, chiefly moral, written with great ingenuity and vivacity. Many of his reflections, it must be owned, have a tendency to encourage Scepticism; and sometimes he indulges a luxuriance of fancy and freedom of language, which grossly violates the rules of decorum; but he must not be wholly excluded from the class of use-

⁵⁵ Blount. *Cena*. p. 819. Teisser. *Elog.* t. iv. p. 167.

⁵⁶ Lond. 1723. *Conf. Art. de Pens.* l. iii. c. 20. *Mallebranche de Inv. Ver.* t. i. l. ii. c. 5. p. 271. *Huet. de Reb. suis.* p. 178. *Fontevivan. Apol. pro Mont. Hist.* apud *Ouv. des Savans*, 1700.

ful moralists. Montaigne's *Essays* are not transcripts from former writers, but the genuine productions of a vigorous and cultivated mind; and it is a circumstance which renders them peculiarly interesting and valuable, that the writer, with perfect openness, discloses his own feelings, and describes the peculiarities of his own character. Montaigne died in 1592.

The footsteps of Montaigne were followed by *Peter Charron*,⁵⁷ a native of Paris, who was born in 1541, and died in 1603. He wrote a treatise "On Wisdom;" a work which abounds with ingenious and original observations on moral topics, but gives a gloomy picture of human nature, and of society.

A valuable treatise "On Morals" was published at Leyden, in 1593, by *Abraham Schultet*,⁵⁸ a divine of Heidelberg. It consists of two books; the former of which is "On a Virtuous Life," the latter, "On a Happy Life." The great merit of this work is, that it is free from the useless subtleties with which most of the writings of this period are encumbered.

The subsequent period abounds with moral writings of various kinds; among which we must mention, with peculiar distinction, Lord Bacon's *Essays*, which are full of judicious and useful observations on life and manners. To these may be added, the ethical writings of *Placcius*,⁵⁹ a native of Lubeck, particularly his "Institutes of Moral Medicine,"⁶⁰ and his "Moral Philosophy."⁶¹ This writer was, if not the first, certainly among the first, who distinguished the science of ethics from that of jurisprudence, and attempted to assign each its proper limit. But these subjects were afterwards more fully and scientifically handled by Grotius and Puffendorf, whose eminent services, in this and other branches of science, entitle them to particular notice.

Hugo Grotius,⁶² or *Hugo de Groot*, a native of Delft, in Holland, was born in 1583. He gave early proofs of a superior genius, in the Latin verses which he wrote before

⁵⁷ Bayle. ⁵⁸ Reim. Hist. Lit. G. p. iv. p. 598. Frek. Theat. p. 424.

⁵⁹ Fabricii Vita Placcii in Theatr. Pseudon. Leibn. Ep. vol. iv. p. 188.

⁶⁰ Hamb. 1676.

⁶¹ Helmstadt. 1677.

⁶² Schudtii Vit. Grot. Francf. ad Moen. 1722. Bayle. Nicéron.

he was nine years old. At twelve years of age, he was admitted into the university of Leyden, where he made a rapid progress in theology, jurisprudence, mathematics, and other sciences. Under the celebrated Scaliger, he acquired much philological knowledge; and at fifteen, he published an edition of *Capella*, with notes, which obtained him the applause of the critics. In 1598, he accompanied the Dutch ambassador to France, where he became acquainted with many learned men, and was introduced to Henry IV. Though early engaged in civil affairs, he did not suffer them to interrupt his studies. He wrote a treatise "*On the Freedom of the Seas*," which gave his countrymen so high an opinion of his abilities, that, in the year 1613, they entrusted him with an embassy to the court of Great Britain, to settle a dispute concerning the right of fishing in the northern seas. This journey introduced him to the acquaintance of many learned Englishmen.

In the theological disputes between the Arminians and Calvinists, which so long distracted the United Provinces, Grotius publicly appeared on the side of the Arminians; and, with other friends to toleration, took such spirited measures to screen them from persecution, as inflamed the resentment of the opposite party; and, after a long struggle, which terminated in the decree of the synod of Dort, condemning the Arminian tenets, he was brought to trial, and received a sentence of confiscation of goods, and perpetual imprisonment. He was accordingly confined in the fortress of Louvestein, in South Holland. Conscious that his conduct had not merited such punishment, Grotius bore his confinement with great composure, and relieved the tediousness of solitude by literary labours; of which the principal were "*A Latin Version of Stobæus*," and an invaluable treatise "*On the Truth of the Christian Religion*." This latter work has been universally read and admired, and has been translated into eleven different languages.⁶³

When Grotius was beginning to despair of regaining his liberty, he obtained an unexpected rescue by the meritorious ingenuity and heroism of his wife. During his whole

⁶³ French, German, English, Danish, Swedish, Dutch, Greek, Arabic, Persian, Indian, and Chinese.

confinement, which had now continued from May, 1619, to March, 1621, that excellent woman had endeavoured to devise means for her husband's escape. At last, she shut him up in a chest, in which books had been brought into his apartment, herself, in the mean time, remaining in the prison; and he was in this manner conveyed to the house of a friend at Goreum; whence, in the habit of a mason, with his rule and trowel, he escaped out of the town. Grotius, thus released by his wife (who was herself, upon her petition to the States-General, in a few days set at liberty) fled out of Holland into Brabant, and afterwards to Antwerp, where he remained some time in concealment. Through the interest of the French ambassador in Holland, and other friends, he at length settled in Paris, whither he was followed by his wife and children, and where he enjoyed the friendship of many eminent men, who assisted him in prosecuting his literary designs.

During this exile, Grotius, at the request of his learned friend Peiresc, undertook, and completed, his great work, *De Jure Belli et Pacis*, "On the Rights of War and Peace." His design, which extended beyond the limits of the title prefixed to the work, was to settle the grounds of the rights of men in civil society. The natural rights of men he founds upon the social principle in human nature; the rights of nations, upon the conventions of states. The doctrines which he advances, he supports by a connected train of reasonings deduced from acknowledged principles, and confirms by authorities from ancient writers, from the civil law, and from the Scholastics. His Eclectic spirit clearly appears, in the general maxim which he lays down concerning ancient systems; that, "as there never was any sect so enlightened as to see the whole truth, so there never was one so erroneous, as to be entirely destitute of truth." The work, which was first published at Paris, in 1625, soon engaged the universal attention of scholars and statesmen.⁶⁴

After remaining eleven years in France, Grotius was, by Cardinal Richlieu, deprived of a pension which he had enjoyed during the greater part of the time; upon which

⁶⁴ Thomas Hist. Jur. Nat. p. 68. Groening. Bibl. Jur. Gent. p. 251. Bibl. Juris Imperant. p. 16.

he determined to hazard a return to Amsterdam. But, though his friends were numerous, he soon found that the party of his enemies was still too powerful to allow him a peaceful settlement in his own country. An order being issued for seizing his person, he found it necessary to withdraw from Holland, and determined to retire to Ham-
burgh. Here he remained till, after refusing repeated solicitations from several potentates to engage in public affairs, he was prevailed upon, in 1634, by the court of Sweden, to go as ambassador to France.

It is to the leisure which Grotius enjoyed during his second residence in France, that the world is indebted for many of his valuable works, particularly his learned and liberal commentaries upon the Scriptures. But these literary occupations so far interrupted his attention to civil affairs, that the Swedish minister thought it necessary to send another agent to Paris; which so displeased Grotius, that he requested to be recalled. Upon his return to Stockholm, he was graciously received, and liberally rewarded by the queen; but, either through an apprehension of suffering by court-intrigue, or through the love of literary retirement, he declined all public offices, and determined once more to hazard a return to his native country. Setting sail for Lubeck, a storm arose, and the vessel was driven upon the coast of Pomerania. Grotius, during the passage, fell sick; and, after his landing, was conveyed, by a tedious journey of eight days, to Rostock; where he died, in 1645, leaving behind him an immortal name, for the elevation and extent of his genius, the variety and depth of his learning, the uprightness of his character, and the important services which he had rendered to religion and philosophy.

The success with which Grotius attempted the improvement of jurisprudence, led *Selden*,⁶⁵ a learned Englishman, born in 1587, and educated at Oxford, to form a new system of the law of nature and nations, on the basis of the Jewish institution, which he supported with a vast display of Oriental learning; but the work is rather a commentary on the Hebrew code, than an institute of natural law.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ See Wilkins's *Life of Selden*, prefixed to his works.

⁶⁶ Thomas *Hist. Jur. Nat.* p. 68—88. *Puff. Erid. Scand.* p. 200.

The edifice of jurisprudence begun by Grotius was finished by *Puffendorf*,⁷ a German, born at Flah, near Chemnitz, in 1631, and educated at Leipsic. The Swedish ambassador at the court of Copenhagen engaged him to undertake the education of his sons; but he was scarcely entered upon his new station, when, a war breaking out between Sweden and Denmark, Copenhagen was besieged, and Puffendorf was made prisoner, and kept in confinement eight months, without books, or the conversation of his friends. In this solitude, he diligently revolved in his mind the different doctrines of Grotius and Hobbes on the law of nature; and, having long before rejected the Peripatetic notion, that moral subjects do not admit of demonstration, he determined to attempt the construction of a system of ethics on evident and indubitable principles.

After his release, Puffendorf, in the year 1659, removed, with his pupils, to the Hague. Here, by the aid of diligent study, and the conversation of learned men, he so far accomplished his design, as to publish "*Elements of Jurisprudence*," written after the geometric manner. The work was dedicated to the Elector Palatine, who entertained so high an opinion of the author's abilities, that he appointed him professor of the law of nature and nations, in the university of Heidelberg. This chair he filled with great credit and success; at the same time prosecuting his studies with indefatigable industry. At the request of the chancellor of Sweden, he afterwards removed to the university at Lund, where he taught jurisprudence, and wrote his celebrated treatise "*On the Law of Nature and Nations*." No sooner was this work known, than it at once raised a numerous host of enemies, who reproached the author as an enemy to religion and government, and a seducer of youth, and who, in short, loaded him with every kind of obloquy. Puffendorf, however, vindicated his doctrine and character so successfully, that his adversaries were silenced, and his public honours continued and increased. He was appointed historiographer to the King of Sweden, and wrote a "*History of the Affairs of Sweden, from the Commencement of the Reign of Gustavus Adolphus*." The title of Baron was also conferred upon him. His honours and la-

⁷ Thomas Hist. Jur. Nat. p. 90, &c. Nicéron. t. xviii.

hours were terminated by death, in the sixty-third year of his age.

The strength of Puffendorf's genius, the clearness of his discernment, the accuracy of his judgment, and the variety and depth of his erudition, are clearly seen in his elaborate treatise *De Jure Naturæ et Gentium*, "On the Law of Nature and Nations." His system was erected on the same foundation with that of Grotius—the social nature of man. Religion he considers as a principle which serves to strengthen the bonds of civil society. In order to give the work as much as possible the force of demonstration, he carefully defines moral terms, investigates the moral nature of man, considers the distinct qualities of moral actions, and derives from these sources the several duties of men towards themselves, towards each other, and towards God. Our limits will not permit us to relate, in detail, the contents of this great work; and it is the less necessary, as the author himself has left a clear and elegant compendium of it in his treatise *De Officiis Hominis et Civis*, "Of the Duties of a Man and a Citizen." These works have been generally read and admired, and have been translated into several languages. If the larger treatise be at present less known than formerly, it is probably owing to its extreme prolixity, the effect of an unnecessary accumulation of quotations and references to the ancients.⁶⁷

That branch of philosophy which treats of *Policy*, or *Civil Government*, has, from the time of the revival of letters, been the subject of frequent discussion. The modern Peripatetics, after the example and upon the principles of Aristotle, have endeavoured to accommodate the art of government to the actually subsisting state of communities. Others, who have deserted the Stagyræ, and speculated with Eclectic freedom on questions of policy, have treated the subject in various ways, systematic or miscellaneous. To enumerate all these in the present work would be impracticable: we shall mention a few of the principal.

Among the learned of the sixteenth century, a name of some celebrity in this branch of philosophy is *John Bodin*,⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Thomas Hist. Jur. Nat. l. c. Bibl. Jur. Imp. l. c.

⁶⁸ Lyser de Vit. Bodin. 1715. Appar. Lit. Witteb. col. ii. p. 312. Bibl. Juris Imp. p. 95. Bayle.

a French lawyer, born at Angier, and educated in the university of Thoulouse. Thuanus relates, that Henry II. of France, who was a lover of letters, frequently conversed with him. He accompanied the Duke of Alençon into England. He wrote a treatise "On States," which is much applauded by Thuanus and others, and was publicly read in the university of Cambridge; it is chiefly valuable for the immense variety of examples and authorities which the writer has collected.⁶⁹

Another political writer of this period is the Spanish Jesuit, *Balthazar Gratian*,⁷⁰ who died in 1658. Most of his pieces, of which "The Courtier," and "The Oracle," are the principal, have been translated into other languages. His observations are not always consistent with the true principles of morality; but they prove the author to have been a shrewd observer of men. To a cautious and judicious reader, they may suggest many curious and useful ideas.

We may here also mention *Trajan Boccalini*,⁷¹ a native of Rome, an ingenious and elegant writer, who employed his wit in satirizing the follies and vices of princes and courtiers, and particularly in detecting the errors of the Spanish government. His principal works are "Tales from Parnassus," and "The Political Touchstone."

But for knowledge of the corrupt arts of policy, and the intrigues of courts, no writer is so famous as *Nicholas Machiavel*,⁷² a Florentine, who flourished at the beginning of the sixteenth century. In his political conduct, Machiavel was an enemy to despotism. He violently opposed the tyranny of the House of Medicis, and was thrown into prison on suspicion of having been concerned in a conspiracy against it; but the charge not being made good, he was released, and soon afterwards received an annual stipend for writing "The History of the Affairs of Florence." In a subsequent conspiracy against the Medicean Cardinal, afterwards Pope Clement VII. he again fell under suspicion, in consequence of his having, in writing, exhibited before his countrymen the example of Brutus and Cassius, to in-

⁶⁹ Lond. 1606.

⁷⁰ Alegamb. Bibl. Soc. Jes.

⁷¹ Erythræi Pinacoth. i. p. 272. iii. p. 223. Bayle.

⁷² Jovii Elog. c. 87. F. Christ. de N. Mach. Vit.

cite them to a strenuous assertion of their liberties. Though not convicted of any treasonable offence, he was deprived of his annuity, and lived in poverty till the year 1593, when he expired in the forty-eighth year of his age.

Machiavel's principal works are, "Dissertations on the first Decad of Livy;" "A History of Florence;" and "The Prince." It is to this latter work, chiefly, that this writer owes his celebrity; but what is the proper character of the piece, or with what design it was written, has been much disputed. Many have understood it to be a system of corrupt policy, written with the serious purpose of instructing princes and statesmen in all the intrigues of state, and the arts of oppression; and consequently have not scrupled to call Machiavel the preceptor of tyrants. But, since the author was, in his political conduct, an enemy to despotism, it is perhaps more reasonable to consider "The Prince" as a satirical work, intended to pull off the mask from the face of tyranny, and, by exposing its base and mischievous stratagems, to render it hateful to mankind. The work is indeed dedicated to the House of Medicis; but this might be only an expedient for concealing more effectually the author's design. If it should be thought, that, in thus laying open the mysteries of courts, Machiavel furnished a manual of political iniquity, it is to be remembered, that the arts of false policy, and the machinations of ambition and tyranny, have been known and practised where Machiavel's "Prince" has never been read.¹²

The pernicious maxims of despotism have, since the days of Machiavel, been often refuted, and the true principles of government established, by Sydney, Locke, Montesquieu, and many other able writers, whose names would appear with splendour in a history of civil policy.

SECT. III.

Of Modern Attempts to improve Natural Philosophy.

THE illustrious Lord Bacon, in turning the attention of philosophers from the speculative and hypothetical to the

¹² Bacon de Augm. Scient. l. vii. c. 2. Arnd; Bibl. Polit. p. iii. See Clarend. Hist. Reb. Book X.

practical and experimental study of nature, opened an extensive field of inquiry, little known to the ancients, which has since been cultivated with astonishing success. To enumerate all the celebrated names which have appeared in this class of modern philosophers; to relate the most interesting particulars of their lives; to trace the progress of their respective researches; to report the advances which have been made in the several departments of physical knowledge, the new facts which experiment and observation have brought to light, and the general truths which they have established; to point out the *desiderata* which yet remain, and deduce from things already known, hints for further improvement; to execute all this with diligent accuracy and sound judgment, would be a great and meritorious work, well deserving the best exertions of the most enlightened philosopher. But such an undertaking will be easily perceived to be far beyond the limits of the present work. Nothing further will be expected in this place, than that we briefly review the lives and labours of a few of those philosophers, who, from the revival of letters to the commencement of the present century, have eminently distinguished themselves by their inquiries and discoveries in natural philosophy.

That spirit of innovation, which in other branches of philosophy was discouraged as dangerous to the established systems, was early permitted in physics. Towards the close of the sixteenth century, Telesius, in Italy, advanced new doctrines; several philosophers in France ventured to contradict the physics of the Peripatetic school; and in England *Nathaniel Carpenter*⁷⁴ wrote a treatise entitled, *Philosophia Libera*,⁷⁵ "Free Philosophy," in which many paradoxical notions were advanced, sufficiently remote from the received doctrines of the schools.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, a philosopher appeared in Great Britain, to whom natural philosophy is much indebted, both because he had the courage to rely upon his own powers, and to recede from the Aristotelian doctrines, to which the British schools at that time superstitiously adhered; and because he engaged, with wonderful industry and success, in the design of investi-

⁷⁴ Wood Athen. Oxon.

⁷⁵ Oxon, 1636.

gating the causes of natural appearances by experiment. Gilbert,⁷⁶ born at Colchester in 1540, wrote a treatise, entitled, *Philosophia nova de Mundo nostro sublanari*, "New Philosophy concerning our sublunary World:" and he made, at a great expense, and with incredible perseverance, a course of experiments on the magnet, the result of which he relates in his treatise, *De Magnete magneticisque Corporibus*, "Of the Magnet and Magnetic Bodies." He maintains, that the magnetic virtue is placed by nature in the terrestrial globe, and that the earth is a vast magnet. Gilbert acquired great and general reputation by this work; and his doctrine was afterwards applied by Halley to explain the variation and dipping of the magnetic needle.

The first modern among the Germans, who appears with any distinction in the class of natural philosophers, is Daniel Sennert,⁷⁷ a physician, who was born at Breslaw, in 1572, was educated at Wittemberg, and died in 1637. He wrote *Hypomneuma Physica*, "Minutes of Physics," in which he contradicts many of the Aristotelian principles. He was the first philosopher who introduced into the German schools the study of chemistry, freed from the fanciful hypotheses of the Paracelsians. His works are voluminous: they are printed in six volumes.⁷⁸

After the time of Lord Bacon, many philosophers upon his principles, and after his example, made use of the art of chemistry as an instrument in the investigation of nature. Among these was Sir Kenelm Digby,⁷⁹ an Englishman, born at Gothurst, in Buckinghamshire, in 1603, and educated at Oxford; who, in the midst of military services, industriously prosecuted physical researches, and, particularly, spared neither labour nor expense in order to make himself master of the secrets of chemistry. These he applied to the improvement of medicine, which he practised with great success. Assuming rarefaction and condensation as physical principles, he endeavoured, in a distinct treatise "On Plants,"⁷⁹ to explain the process of vegetation. He also wrote "On the Nature of Bodies," and "On the Immortality of the Soul."

⁷⁶ Morhoff. Polyh. t. ii. p. 410.

⁷⁷ Witt. Mem. Med. p. 80. Bayle.

⁷⁸ Ludg. 1676. fol.

⁷⁹ Wood Athen. Oxon. Bullart. Acad. des Scien. t. ii. p. 1137. Bayle.

Chemistry was from this time studied and practised by many other eminent physicians and philosophers, among whom the name of *Boerhaave* ought to be mentioned with peculiar distinction, both on account of the improvements which he made in this art, and the pains which he took to shew its utility, not only in medicine, but in the general study of physics. He died in 1738, aged seventy years.

One of the most industrious and successful interpreters of nature, which the seventeenth century, so fruitful in great men, produced, was *Robert Boyle*, descended from the illustrious family of the Boyles, in Ireland. He was born at Lismore, in the year 1627. After travelling through France, Italy, and Switzerland, to extend his acquaintance with the works of nature and art, he fixed his residence at Oxford, where he devoted himself to the study of medicine and natural philosophy. It was during his residence here, that the design was formed and completed, by himself and several other philosophers, of establishing a society for the improvement of natural knowledge. After its establishment in London, under the patronage of Charles II. and under the name of the Royal Society, Boyle removed thither, and employed the remainder of his days in researches into nature. He died, much lamented by all the friends of science and virtue, in 1691.²⁰

Boyle possessed every advantage for the prosecution of physical inquiries; an extensive intercourse with the philosophical world, a fortune adequate to the expense of experiments, great industry, a sound judgment, and an ardent thirst after knowledge: and his success was equal to every expectation which these circumstances might create; as fully appears from his own account of his experiments on Air, on Hydrostatics, on Colours, on the Atmosphere, on the Human Blood, and other subjects. This great man was no less celebrated for his personal virtues, than for his knowledge of nature. Probity, modesty, humanity, and piety, were prominent features in his character. His religious temper appears in many of his writings, and was particularly shewn in the reverence which he expressed for the name of God, which he is said never to have mentioned without a pause.

²⁰ His works are printed in five volumes, folio, London, 1744.

There is no class of men to whom natural philosophy is more indebted than to mathematicians. These have largely contributed to its improvement, by the diligence and accuracy with which they have made and registered astronomical observations, and by the pains which they have taken to subject the known laws of motion to arithmetical calculation, and geometrical demonstration, and hence to deduce mathematical principles of physics. Out of the numerous body of mathematical philosophers, we must only select the great names of Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, Kepler, Galileo, and Newton.

Nicholas Copernicus^a was born at Thorn, in Prussia, in 1472. Having acquired, during the course of his education at Cracow, a fondness for mathematical studies, and particularly for astronomy, he went to Bologna to prosecute these studies under an eminent astronomer of that university. Here he obtained such distinction, that he was appointed professor of mathematics at Rome. Returning, after some years, to his native country, he obtained a canonry in the cathedral church of Frauenburg, and in the leisure which this situation afforded him, pursued his astronomical speculations. Perceiving the Ptolemaic system (which supposes the earth to be fixed in the centre, and the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, to revolve about it in concentric circles) to be inconsistent with the *phenomena*, and encumbered with many absurdities, he had recourse to the Pythagorean hypothesis, which places the sun in the centre of the system, and makes the earth a planet, revolving annually with the rest about the sun, and daily about its own axis. Upon this system, compared with the observations which had been made by others and himself, he proceeded to ascertain the periodical revolutions of the planets, and wrote his treatise *De Orbium Coelestium Revolutionibus*, "On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Bodies," in which he demonstrated them geometrically.

A doctrine, which explained the celestial *phenomena* with so much simplicity, could not fail to engage the attention and admiration of astronomers and philosophers. But, on account of its apparent inconsistency with some

^a Gassend. Vit. Cop. Weidler. Hist. Astron. Adam. Vit. Phil.

passages of Scripture, it was rejected by many divines, and censured in an express decree of the Romish church. Nevertheless, the doctrine daily gained ground, and is now universally received. Copernicus died in 1543.

In order to remove the offence which was taken by so many learned men against the doctrine of Copernicus, a Danish astronomer, *Tycho Brahe*,^a invented a system between the Ptolemaic and Copernican. This philosopher, born at Knudstorp, in Sweden, in 1546, was educated for the profession of the law, first at Copenhagen, and afterwards at Leipsic; but relinquished that profession, and gave himself up to the study of astronomy. After various journeys, in which his astronomical knowledge procured him great reputation, the King of Denmark, through the recommendation of the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, furnished him with a house, an observatory, and an astronomical apparatus in the island of Huen in the Sound; and appointed him an annual stipend, on condition that he should devote himself to astronomy. Here he continued his observations for many years. But at length the King of Denmark, offended at the philosopher, as it is said, on account of his having pretended to cure diseases by secret means, deprived him of his salary. Tycho Brahe, upon this, removed to Prague, where he was patronized by Rodolphus II. and had for his assistant in astronomical calculations the celebrated Kepler. In this place he died, in the year 1601.

The system of Tycho Brahe supposed the earth quiescent, and the sun, with the whole heavens, to revolve about it with such a complex motion, that, while the earth is the centre of the sun's orbit, the sun is the centre of all the planetary orbits. The author of this system was preparing a geometrical demonstration of its agreement with the celestial *phenomena*, when death put an end to his labours. Tycho Brahe was a man of violent passions, impatient of contradiction, intemperate, libidinous, and superstitious. He only deserves to be remembered on account of his astronomical observations, and his system of the celestial motions, which, however, being the mere fiction of an ingenious brain, perished with its author.

Science was less indebted to Tycho Brahe than to his

^a Gassend. Vit. Tych. Br.

colleague, *John Kepler*,^{*} a German, born in 1571, at Wied, in the dutchy of Wittemburg, and educated at Tübingen. His early and uncommon proficiency in mathematical learning recommended him to the attention of the university of Gratz, in Stiria, as a proper person to occupy the mathematical chair. From this time astronomy became the chief object of his attention; and, in 1595, he published *Mysterium Cosmographicum*, "The Mystery of Cosmography;" in which he undertook to demonstrate, upon geometrical principles, the admirable proportions of the celestial orbs, and to explain the reasons of their number, magnitudes, and periodical revolutions; a work abounding with clear and accurate mathematical reasoning. At Prague, whither he was driven, about the year 1600, by the troubles and persecutions of his own country, Kepler, with his family, notwithstanding his personal abilities and merit, and his connexion with Tycho Brahe, was reduced to poverty. At length, through the indulgence of the emperor, he was recalled to his native country, and taught mathematics, first at Linz, and afterwards at Sagan, in Silesia. He died in the year 1631.

For the particulars of Kepler's great discoveries and improvements in astronomy, we must refer the reader to his works. We cannot, however, omit to remark, that this penetrating philosopher suggested hints in natural science which Des Cartes afterwards assumed as his own, and discovered truths, which served as a firm foundation for subsequent improvements in the great edifice of mathematical astronomy. Kepler found, that every primary planet describes an elliptic orbit, in one focus of which is the sun; that, in equal times, equal areas are described by a line drawn from the sun to the planet; and that the squares of the periodical times of the planets are as the cubes of their distances from the sun. He was also acquainted with the principle of gravitation, and knew that revolving bodies endeavour to fly from their orbit in a tangent. But, not knowing how to apply the principle of gravitation to the explanation of the laws of the celestial motions which he had discovered, he ascribed them to the influence of a distinct animating principle, or soul, which he supposed to reside in each planet.

^{*}Gassend. t. v. p. 451. 471. Bayle. Weidler. l. c. c. 15. p. 414.

Contemporary with Kepler was *Galileo Galilei*,⁶⁶ a native of Florence, whose astronomical inventions and discoveries have immortalized his name. Destined by his father for the medical profession, he was educated in the schools of Pisa: but he soon discovered so strong a predilection, and such uncommon talents, for astronomical studies, that he was permitted to follow the natural bias of his mind without any professional restraint. Having been well instructed in the Greek tongue, he read Euclid, Archimedes, and other ancient mathematicians in the original. His reputation as a mathematician became so great, that the Duke of Tuscany appointed him, before he was twenty-six years of age, to the mathematical chair in the university of Pisa. Afterwards, in the year 1592, at the invitation of the republic of Venice, he removed to Padua.

With the study of mathematics, Galileo united that of physics, particularly the doctrines of mechanics and optics. Being informed, in the year 1609, that Jansen, a Dutchman, had invented a glass, by means of which distant objects appeared as if they were near, he turned his attention to the subject; and, after several attempts to apply his ideas on the doctrine of refraction to practice, he invented and constructed an optical instrument, by means of which, as he himself says, objects appeared magnified a thousand times. Turning his *Telescope* towards the heavens, he discovered unheard-of wonders. On the surface of the moon he saw lofty mountains and deep vallies. The milky way he discovered to be a crowded assemblage of fixed stars, invisible to the naked eye. Venus he found to vary in its phases like the moon. The figure of Saturn he observed to be oblong, consisting of three distinct parts. Jupiter he saw surrounded with four moons, which he named Medicean stars. And on the sun's disk he perceived spots, from the motion of which he inferred, that the sun revolves about its axis. The book in which these wonderful discoveries were recorded, Galileo dedicated to the Duke of Tuscany, who was so delighted with his countryman's ingenuity and success, that he wrote him a congratulatory letter, and gave him the title of the Philosopher and Mathematician of Tuscany. The whole astronomical world ap-

⁶⁶ Viviani Vit. Gal. Act. Phil. v. iii. p. 261. 400.

plauded his attempts, although not a few were secretly inclined to suspect, that his supposed discoveries were only the amusing dreams of a brilliant imagination.

Galileo now began to inquire to what useful purposes his new discoveries might be applied, and soon perceived, that, by means of observations which he was now able to make upon the satellites of Jupiter, geographical longitudes might be found. He engaged the Duke of Tuscany to apprise the King of Spain of the great benefits which navigation might derive from this discovery; but no regard was paid to the suggestion.

A comet appearing in the year 1618, Galileo, in order to correct the prevailing errors of philosophers upon the subject of celestial *phenomena*, wrote a treatise which he called, *Systema Cosmicum*, "The System of the World," in which he shewed the perfect agreement of the Copernican system with the appearances of nature. The publication of this treatise, though preceded by another, in which it was proved, from the authority of the fathers, and other orthodox divines, that the language of Scripture is not to be strictly followed on questions merely physical, raised a general alarm among the bigots of the Romish church. This incomparable philosopher was, in 1615, cited before the Court of Inquisition, accused of heresy, and thrown into prison. Well-knowing that any justification of himself, or explanation of his doctrine, would be fruitless, Galileo retracted the obnoxious tenet, that the sun stands still; and, after five months' confinement, was released. His work was censured and prohibited.

In 1636, this ingenious and industrious philosopher resumed his design of measuring geographical distances in longitude, and communicated his plan to the States-General of the United Provinces. By their order, the plan was examined, and the necessary calculations were made for drawing the tables. But a misfortune, which at this time happened to Galileo, interrupted the laudable design. After the astronomical labours of twenty-seven years, this useful philosopher lost his sight. The papers which he had drawn up were sent to Holland; and it was still hoped that he might furnish further instructions towards completing the design; but, about the beginning of the year 1642, a slow

fever, occasioned by the pain which he suffered in his eyes and limbs, released him from envy and persecution. The light which Galileo cast upon natural philosophy by his astronomical inventions and improvements, which are doubtless in a great measure to be ascribed to his knowledge of mathematics, entitle him to a place in the first class of mathematical philosophers. He discovered, that in the descent of falling bodies, the spaces described are as the squares of the times; and that the motion of projectiles is in the curve of a parabola.

From the time of Galileo, the practice of applying mathematics to the improvement of physical knowledge became general; and many excellent geometricians arose, who subjected the *phenomena* of nature to mathematical calculation. Gregory de St. Vincent, who enlarged the boundaries of the higher geometry, applied the properties of the hyperbola to astronomy. Des Cartes, Wallis, Huygens, and others, pursued a similar track. Since the sublime inventions of the Differential Calculus by Leibnitz, and of the Method of Fluxions by Newton, natural philosophy has received continual improvement by the labours of Leibnitz, L'Hospital, Varignon, the Bernouillis, Cotes, Saunderson, Maclaurin, and other eminent mathematicians. But the first luminary in this bright constellation, by the universal consent of philosophers, is the immortal Newton.

ISAAC NEWTON⁸⁵ was born at Woolstrobe, in Lincolnshire, in the year 1642. He received his first instruction at the grammar school at Grantham. He gave early indications of that sublime genius, which afterwards performed such wonders, in his insatiable thirst after knowledge, and the almost intuitive facility with which he first conceived the theorems of Euclid. Though not inattentive to classical studies, he directed the chief exertions of his penetrating and exalted understanding towards mathematical science, in which, not contented with a perfect comprehension of whatever had been already done by others, he was wonderfully assiduous and successful in investigating new truths. The university of Cambridge boasts the honour of having educated Newton. His first preceptor was the cele-

⁸⁵ Eloge par Fontenelle. Pemberton's Review, præf. Hist. of the Royal Society. Life of Newton, Lond. 1728. Biog. Brit. Gen. Dict.

brated geometrician, Isaac Barrow. In 1667, Newton took his degree of Master of Arts, and was soon after admitted Fellow of Trinity College, and appointed Lucasian Professor of Mathematics. In 1688, he was chosen representative in the convention parliament for the university, and continued to adorn this high station till the dissolution of this parliament in the year 1701; he was also appointed Master of the Mint, and in this post rendered signal service to the public. In the year 1703, he was elected President of the Royal Society, and remained in that office as long as he lived.

Whilst Newton gave many proofs of his astonishing capacity for mathematical researches, he shewed himself possessed of a mind equally capable of extending the knowledge of nature, by the reports which he made to the Royal Society of many curious and important experiments in natural philosophy. In the year 1671, his papers on the properties of light were read to that Society, from which it appeared that colour, which had hitherto been explained by ingenious but unsupported hypotheses, was in fact owing to a property in the rays of light hitherto unobserved, their different degrees of refrangibility. These papers were afterwards completed; and, in the year 1704, the whole was published in three books, under the general title of "Optics; or, a Treatise of the Reflections, Refractions, Inflections, and Colours of Light."

The result of this great philosopher's successful endeavours to subject the *phænomena* of nature to the laws of mathematics, was first communicated to the public in the year 1687, in the immortal work entitled, *Philosophiæ naturalis Principia mathematica*, "Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy:" this was succeeded by several treatises purely mathematical, in which the wonderful genius of this great geometrician is further displayed. His *Method of Fluxions* was first published in 1704.

In the midst of his philosophical and mathematical labours, Newton found leisure to attend to critical inquiries. He wrote a treatise "On the Chronology of ancient Kingdoms," in which, from a diligent comparison of various notes of time in ancient writers with each other, and with astronomical *phænomena*, he concludes, that; in former

systems of chronology, the more remote events of ancient history are placed too far backwards. He also wrote commentaries on Daniel and on the Revelations.¹⁵

Notwithstanding the strenuous exertion of the faculties; which the profound researches of this philosopher must have required, he lived to the eighty-fifth year of his age. This glory of the British nation, and ornament of human nature, left the world in the year 1726. During his life he rose to higher reputation, and after his death obtained a greater name, than had been the lot of any former philosopher. The epitaph under his statue well expresses his singular merit; it is as follows:—

H. S. E.

ISAACUS NEWTON, Eques Auratus,
Qui Animi Vi prope divinâ,
Planetarum Motus, Figuras,
Cometarum Semitas, Oceani Æstus,
Sua Mathesi Facem præferente,
Primus demonstravit.

Radiatorum Lucis Dissimilitudines,
Colorum inde nascentium
Proprietates,
Quas nemo antea vel suspicatus erat,
Pervestigavit.

Naturæ, Antiquitatis, S. Scripturæ,
Sedulus, sagax, fidus Interpres,
Dei O. M. Majestatem Philosophiâ asseruit,
Evangelii Simpliciter Moribus expressit.

Sibi gratulentur Mortales,
Tale tantumque extitisse
Humani Generis Decus.

Natus 25 Dec. A. D. 1642. Obiit 20 Mar. 1726.

¹⁵ Newton's Works were published by Dr. Horsley, since Bishop of St David's, in 1784. 5 vols. 4to.

"Here lies interred
ISAAC NEWTON, Knight,
Who,

With an Energy of Mind almost Divine,
Guided by the Light of Mathematics purely his own,
First demonstrated

To give the reader a perfect idea of the philosophy of Newton, would be to conduct him through every part of his philosophical works. We must content ourselves with a brief account of the design and plan of his *Principia*, and a few miscellaneous observations chiefly extracted from the Queries subjoined to his Optics.

Dissatisfied with the hypothetical grounds on which former philosophers, particularly Des Cartes, had raised the structure of natural philosophy, Newton adopted the manner of philosophizing introduced by Lord Bacon, and determined to raise a system of natural philosophy on the basis of experiment. He laid it down as a fundamental rule, that nothing is to be assumed as a principle, which is not established by observation and experience, and that no hypothesis is to be admitted into physics, except as a question, the truth of which is to be examined by its agreement with appearances. "Whatever," says he,⁸⁸ "is not deduced from *phenomena*, is to be called an hypothesis: and hypotheses, whether physical or metaphysical, whether of occult qualities or mechanical, have no place in experimental philosophy." In this philosophy, propositions are drawn from *phenomena*, and are rendered general by in-

The Motions and Figures of the Planets;
 The Paths of Comets,
 And the Causes of the Tides;
 Who discovered,
 What before his Time no one had even suspected,
 That Rays of Light are differently refrangible;
 And
 That this is the Cause of Colours;
 And who was
 A diligent, penetrating, and faithful Interpreter
 Of Nature, Antiquity, and the Sacred Writings.
 In his Philosophy
 He maintained the Majesty of the Supreme Being;
 In his Manners
 He expressed the Simplicity of the Gospel.
 Let Mortals congratulate themselves,
 That the World has seen
 So great and excellent a Man,
 The Glory of Human Nature.
 He was born Dec. 25, 1642. Died March 20, 1726.

⁸⁸ Princip. I. iii. Gen. Schol.

duction. This plan of philosophizing he pursued in two different methods, the Analytic and the Synthetic; collecting from certain *phenomena* the forces of nature, and the more simple laws of these forces, and then proceeding on the foundation of these to establish the rest. In explaining, for example, the system of the world, he first proves from experience, that the power of gravitation belongs to all bodies: then, assuming this as an established principle, he demonstrates by mathematical reasoning, that the earth and sun, and all the planets, mutually attract each other, and that the smallest parts of matter in each have their several attractive forces, which are as their quantities of matter, and which, at different distances, are inversely as the squares of their distances. In investigating the theorems of the *Principia*, Newton made use of his own analytical Method of Fluxions: but, in explaining his system, he has followed the synthetic method of the ancients, and demonstrated the theorems geometrically.

The leading design of the *Principia* is, from certain *phenomena* of motion to investigate the forces of nature, and then, from these forces to demonstrate the manner in which other *phenomena* are produced. The former is the end towards which the general propositions in the first and second books are directed; the third book affords an example of the latter, in the explanation of the system of the world.

The laws of motion, which are the foundation of the Newtonian system, are these three: 1. Every body perseveres in its state of rest, or of uniform motion in a right line, unless compelled by some force impressed upon it to change its state. 2. The change of motion is proportional to the force impressed, and is made in the direction of the right line in which that force is impressed. 3. To every action an equal reaction is always opposed; or the mutual actions of two bodies upon each other are equal, and in contrary directions.

On the grounds of these laws, and certain corollaries deducible from them, by the help of geometrical principles and reasonings, Newton, in the first book, demonstrates in what manner centripetal forces may be found; what is the motion of bodies in eccentric conic sections; how, from

given *foci*, elliptic, parabolic, and hyperbolic orbits, may be found; how the orbits are to be found when neither focus is given; how the motions may be found in given orbits; what are the laws of the rectilineal ascent and descent of bodies; how the orbits of bodies revolving by means of any centripetal force may be found; what is the motion of bodies in moveable orbits, and what the motion of the *ap-sides*; what is the motion of bodies in given superficies, and the reciprocal motion of pendulums; what are the motions of the bodies tending towards each other with centripetal forces; and what the attractive forces of bodies spherical, or not spherical. In the second book, Newton treats of the motion of bodies which are resisted in the ratio of their velocities; of the motion of bodies resisted in the duplicate ratio of their velocities; of the motion of bodies resisted partly in the ratio of the velocities, and partly in the duplicate of the same ratio; of the circular motion of bodies in resisting mediums; of the density and compression of fluids; of the motion and resistance of pendulums; of the motion of fluids, and the resistance made to projected bodies; of motion propagated through fluids; and of the circular motion of fluids.

By the propositions mathematically demonstrated in these books, chiefly those of the first three sections, the author, in the third book, derives from the celestial *phenomena*, the forces of gravitation with which bodies tend towards the sun and the several planets. He then proceeds, by other propositions, which are also mathematical, to deduce from these forces the motions of the planets, the comets, the moon, and the tides; to ascertain the magnitude and form of the planets; and to explain the cause of the precession of the equinoxes.

To this outline of the *Principia*, we shall add the following miscellaneous observations, which may serve as a specimen of the *opinions* of Newton:

The main business of natural philosophy is to argue from *phenomena*, without feigning hypotheses, and to deduce causes from effects till we come to the very first cause, which certainly is not mechanical.

No more causes of natural things ought to be admitted, than are known to exist, and are sufficient to explain their appearances.

Therefore natural effects of the same kind are to be ascribed to the same cause.

Those properties of bodies which do not admit of intension or remission, and which are found to belong to all bodies upon which experiments can be made, are to be regarded as properties common to all bodies.

It is probable, that all the *phaenomena* of nature depend upon certain forces, by which, from causes not yet known, the particles of bodies are either mutually impelled towards each other, and cohere according to regular figures; or mutually repel and recede from each other.

Bodies and light mutually act upon one another.

All fixed bodies, when heated beyond a certain degree, emit light, and shine, and this emission is performed by the vibrating motion of their parts.

Fire is a body heated so hot as to emit light copiously: and flame is a vapour, fume, or exhalation, heated red hot; that is, so hot as to shine.

The rays of light, in falling upon the bottom of the eye, excite vibrations in the *tunica retina*, which, being propagated along the solid fibres of the optic nerve to the brain, cause the sense of seeing.

The heat of a warm room is conveyed through a *vacuum* by the vibrations of a much subtler medium than air, which, after the air is drawn out, remains in the vacuum. It is by the vibrations of this medium, that light is refracted and reflected, heat communicated. This medium is exceedingly more elastic and active, as well as subtle, than the air; it readily pervades all bodies, and is by its elastic force expanded through the heavens. Its density is greater in free and open space than in compact bodies, and increases as it recedes from them. This medium, growing denser and denser perpetually as it passes from the celestial bodies, may, by its elastic force, cause the gravity of those great bodies towards one another, and of their parts towards the bodies. Vision, hearing, and animal motion, may be performed by the vibrations of this subtle elastic fluid; or ether.

The small particles of bodies have certain powers, virtues, or forces, by which they act, at a distance, upon one another, for producing a great part of the *phenomena* of

nature; as in the attractions of gravity, magnetism, and electricity.

The smallest particles of matter may cohere by the strongest attractions, and compose bigger particles of weaker virtue: and many of these may cohere, and compose larger particles, whose virtue is still weaker, and so on for divers successions, until the progressions end in the biggest particles, on which the operations in chemistry, and the colours of natural bodies, depend, and which by cohering compose bodies of a sensible magnitude.

The particles of different bodies cohere with different degrees of force; whence some are volatile, easily rarefying with heat, and condensing with cold, whilst others are fixed, and not separable without a strong heat, or fermentation. Those particles recede from one another with the greatest force, and are with most difficulty brought together, which, upon contact, cohere most strongly.

Nature is very conformable to herself, and very simple, performing all the great motions of the heavenly bodies by the attraction of gravity which intercedes those bodies, and almost all the small ones of their particles, by some other attractive and repelling powers which intercede the particles.

The *vis inertiae* is a passive principle, by which bodies persist in their motion or rest, receive motion in proportion to the force impressing it, and resist as much as they are resisted. By this principle alone there never could have been any motion in the world. Some other principle was necessary for putting bodies into motion; and now they are in motion, some other principle is necessary for preserving the motion: for from the various composition of two motions, it is very certain, that there is not always the same quantity of motion in the world.

Since the variety of motion which we find in the world is always decreasing through resistance, there is a necessity of recruiting it by active principles, such as are the cause of gravity, and of fermentation, to which almost all the motion we meet with in the world is owing.

It is probable, that God in the beginning formed matter in solid, massy, hard, impenetrable, moveable particles, of such sizes and figures, and with such other properties, and

in such proportion to space, as most conduced to the end for which he formed them ; and that these primary particles being solids, are incomparably harder than any porous bodies compounded of them, even so very hard, as never to wear, or break in pieces, or be liable to a change in their nature and texture. It is also probable, that the changes of corporeal things consist only in various separations, and new associations and motions of these permanent particles, produced by certain active principles, such as that of gravity, and that which causes fermentation and the cohesion of bodies.

By the help of these principles, all material things seem to have been composed of the hard and solid particles abovementioned, variously associated in the first creation by the counsel of an intelligent Agent ; for it became him who created them to set them in order ; and it is unphilosophical to seek for any other origin of the world, or to pretend that it might arise out of a chaos, by the mere laws of nature ; though being once formed it may continue by those laws for many ages. For while comets move in very eccentric orbs, in all manner of positions, blind fate could never make all the planets move one and the same way in orbs concentric, some inconsiderable irregularities excepted, which may have arisen from the mutual actions of comets and planets upon one another, and which will be apt to increase, till this system wants a reformation. Such a wonderful uniformity in the planetary system must be allowed the effect of choice. And so must the uniformity in the bodies of animals. Was the eye contrived without skill in optics, or the ear, without knowledge of sounds ?—The first contrivance of those very artificial parts of animals, the various organs of sense and motion, and the instinct of brutes and insects, can be the effect of nothing else than the wisdom and skill of a powerful ever-living Agent, who, being in all places, is more able by his will to move the bodies within his boundless uniform sensorium, and thereby to form and reform the parts of the universe, than we are by our will to move the parts of our own bodies. And yet we are not to consider the world as the body of God, or the several parts thereof as the parts of God ; he is an uniform being, void of organs, members,

or parts, and they are his creatures, subordinate to him, and subservient to his will. God has no need of organs; he being every where present to the things themselves.

It appears from *phænomena*, that there is a Being incorporeal, living, intelligent, omnipresent, who, in infinite space, as it were in his sensory, sees the things themselves intimately, and thoroughly perceives them, and comprehends them wholly by their immediate presence to himself.

This most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and comets, could only arise from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being. And if the fixed stars be centres of similar systems, these being all formed by like wisdom, must be subject to the dominion of one: especially since the light of the fixed stars is of the same nature with the light of the sun, and all systems mutually give and receive light.

God governs all things, not as the soul of the world, but as the Lord of the universe. The Supreme Deity is an eternal, infinite, and absolutely perfect being, omnipotent and omniscient; that is, his duration extends from eternity to eternity, and his presence from infinity to infinity; he governs all things, and knows all things which exist, or can be known. He is not eternity or infinity, but eternal and infinite: he is not duration or space, but he endures, and is present; he endures for ever, and is present every where. Since every portion of space is always, and every indivisible moment of duration is every where, certainly the Maker and Lord of all things cannot be never or no where. God is omnipresent, not virtually only, but substantially, for power cannot subsist without substance. In him all things are contained and move, but without reciprocal affection: God is not affected by the motion of bodies, nor do bodies suffer resistance from the omnipresence of God.

It is universally allowed, that God exists necessarily; and by the same necessity he exists always and every where. Whence he is throughout similar, all eye, all ear, all brain, all arm, all power of perceiving, understanding, and acting; but in a manner not at all human; in a manner not at all corporeal; in a manner to us altogether unknown. As a blind man has no idea of colours, so we have

no idea of the manner in which the Most Wise God perceives and understands all things. He is entirely without body and bodily form, and therefore can neither be seen, nor heard, nor touched; nor ought he to be worshipped under any corporeal representation. We have ideas of his attributes, but what the substance of any thing is we are wholly ignorant. We see only the figures and colours of bodies; we hear only sounds; we touch only external superficies; we smell only odours; we taste only savours: of their internal substances we have no knowledge by any sense, or by any reflex act of the mind: much less have we any idea of the substance of God. We know him only by his properties and attributes, by the most wise and excellent structure of things, and by final causes: and we reverence and worship him on account of his dominion. A God without dominion, providence, and design, is nothing else but Fate and Nature.

Many learned mathematicians, and celebrated writers, have attempted to illustrate and explain different parts of the writings of Newton: and, on the other hand, some have ventured to call in question the ground of his philosophy.

It has been objected, that Attraction, the first principle in the Newtonian philosophy, is in reality one of those occult qualities which Newton professes to reject. But to this it is satisfactorily replied, that the power of gravity is not an unknown cause, since its existence is proved from the *phenomena*. The Newtonian philosophy does not require, that the cause of gravitation should be explained. It merely assumes an incontrovertible fact, that bodies gravitate towards each other according to a known law, and, by the help of geometrical reasoning, deduces from this fact certain conclusions. Newton himself gives this explanation of the use which is made in his philosophy of the principle of gravitation, and expressly asserts, that it is enough for him that gravity really exists, though its cause be not certainly known. "I use the word Attraction," says he "for any endeavour of bodies to approach each other, whether that endeavour arises from the action of bodies mutually seeking each other, or mutually agitating each other by spirits emitted, or whether it arises from

the action of the ether, or air, or any other medium whatsoever, corporeal or incorporeal, in any manner impelling bodies floating therein towards each other. In the same general sense I use the word Impulse, not considering the species and physical qualities of forces, but their mathematical quantities and proportions, consequent upon any condition supposed; then, in physics, we compare these proportions with the *phenomena* of nature, that we may know what conditions of those forces answer to the several kinds of attractive bodies." In fine, no words can be more explicit than those in which Newton disclaims all reliance upon hypothetical principles, or occult qualities, and makes experience the only foundation of his philosophy.

But we are stepping beyond the province of the historian. The cursory view we have taken of the doctrine of Newton, and of what was done by his predecessors in experimental philosophy to improve the knowledge of nature, may suffice to shew the vast extent and importance of this branch of philosophy, and to induce the reader to inquire, what discoveries have been made, in the boundless fields of nature, since the days of Newton; and further than this it is not our business to proceed; for we undertook, not to delineate minutely the several regions of philosophy, but to draw a *general map* of the *philosophical world*.

APPENDIX.

HINTS RELATIVE TO THE MODERN STATE OF PHILOSOPHY IN ASIA.

I.

THE inhabitants of *Asia* are, in general, with respect to religion, either Mahometans or Pagans. Many traces of opinions, formerly received from the Saracens, are to be found among the Persian and Indian Mahometans. There are still remaining in Persia writings of Greek and Latin philosophers, translated into the Persian language.¹ The ancient Oriental doctrines are taught among the Susians, who assert, that the universe is produced from the substance of Deity, and make God the material and formal cause of all things, and creation and destruction the expansion and retraction of his substance: a doctrine more similar to the philosophy of Zoroaster, than to the theology of Mahomet.²

Of the *Tartars*, those who border upon the Turkish empire are Mahometans; the religion of those who inhabit the more remote regions is unknown. Their priests are called *Lamæ*, and their high priest, *Dalai Lama*. They believe their Great Lama to be immortal; and some assert, that he is the great philosopher Fœe returned to life.

¹ Chardin's *Travels*, P. iii. p. 106.

² Bernier *Suite des Memoires sur l'Emp. de Mogoul*, p. 202, 3. Bayle Dict. t. iv. p. 254. Art. *Spinosa*. Burnet *Archæol. App.*

This philosopher is, through almost all Asia, said to have frequently appeared among men. It is probable, that his doctrines penetrated into Tartary.³

Through the extensive regions of *India*, the grossest superstition and ignorance prevail. From comparing the theological tenets of different Indian nations it appears, that they commonly embrace the emanative system, which supposes innumerable Divine Natures proceeding from the fountain of Deity, and presiding over different parts of the universe. This doctrine was probably disseminated by some ancient impostor, who pretended to be himself a Divine emanation of this kind, and whom his superstitious followers have worshipped as a divinity.⁴

If the account given of *Buddas*, the celebrated Indian philosopher, be compared with what is said by the modern inhabitants of Siam concerning *Somonacodom*, and by the Chinese and Japanese of *Xekias*, who after his death was called *Fœe*, or *Fotoki*, little doubt will remain, that these are only different names of the same philosopher, who fascinated the whole northern and eastern region of Asia, as well as part of the southern, with his Pantheistic doctrine. It is probable that he lived about six hundred years before Christ. There is little doubt, that he first appeared in the southern part of India, among the nations situate on the borders of the Indian Ocean, and thence disseminated his philosophy, by means of his disciples, to all India. It is related, that he spent twelve years in solitude, where he was instructed by the *Tolopoin*, called by the ancients *Hylotii*, that is, Sylvan Hermits; and that, in his thirtieth year, he devoted himself to contemplation, and attained to the intuitive knowledge of the first principles of all things, from which time he took the name of *Fœe*, which signifies *something more than human*. His mystical philosophy he is said to have delivered to innumerable disciples, under the veil of allegory. The Japanese add, that in his contemplations, during which his body remained unmoved, and his senses unaffected by any external object, he re-

³ Moshem. Hist. Ecol. Tartar. Duhalde Hist. Chin. t. iv. p. 467.

⁴ Conf. Locke Ess. l. i. c. iii. § 15. La Croze Christ. Ind. l. vi. p. 645. Loubere Itin. Siam. t. ii. p. 396. Bayle, Art. Rugger. Nat. D. Barbet Arch. p. 643. Univ. Hist. de Siamena.

ceived Divine revelations, which he communicated to his disciples.⁵

Buddas, or Xekias, in his exoteric doctrine, taught the difference between good and evil, the immortality of the souls of men and brutes; different degrees of rewards and punishments in a future world; and the final advancement of the wicked, after various migrations, to the habitations of the blessed. Amidas, who, according to the Chinese, is Xekias himself, presides in these habitations, and is the mediator through whose intercession bad men obtain a mitigation of their punishment. These dogmas are contained in an ancient book called Kio, which all the Indians beyond the Ganges, who follow the doctrine of Xekias, receive as sacred, and which is illustrated by innumerable commentaries.⁶

Very different was the doctrine which Xekias at the close of his life delivered to his esoteric disciples. He instructed them, that Vacuum, or Void, is the principle and end of all things, simple, infinite, eternal, but destitute of power, intelligence, or any other similar attribute; and that to be like this principle, by extinguishing all passion and affection, and remaining absorbed in the most profound contemplation, without any exercise of the reasoning faculty, is the perfection of happiness. The first principle in this system cannot be pure nihility, which admits of no properties; probably, it is First Matter, without variable qualities, whence all things are supposed to arise, which is not to be perceived by the senses, but contemplated as the latent Divinity, infinitely distant from the nature of visible things, yet the origin of all substances. The emanations from this fountain became, in the popular theology, objects of the grossest superstition and idolatry.⁷

The doctrine of Föe, or Xekias, was embraced by innumerable disciples. Among these, one of his most eminent successors was Tamo, a Chinese, who was so entirely devoted to contemplative enthusiasm, that he spent nine

⁵ La Croze *Christianism*. Ind. l. vi. Bayle *Diet. Art.* Brachmans. Sommonac. Kempfer. *Hist. Jap.* t. i. p. 56. t. ii. p. 59.

⁶ Kempfer. *Arnold*. in *Add. ad Reger*. Jan. Gent. c. 6. p. 579. *Couplet. Diss. pr. ad Confuc.* p. 31. *Acta Erud.* 1698. p. 257.

⁷ La Croze, l. c. p. 662. Kempfer. *Couplet*. l. c.

whole years in profound meditation, and was, on this account, deified.^a

The Bramins assert that Xekias had neither father nor mother. No Indian city claims the honour of his birth. He seems to have been a foreigner from some neighbouring maritime country. As he first appeared as a philosopher in the southern part of India, it is probable that he was a Lybian, who had been instructed in the Egyptian mysteries, and who settled in India with some Egyptian colony. It is not improbable, that at the time when Cambyses conquered Egypt, and dispersed almost the whole nation, this impostor passed over into India, and, propagating his doctrine among an ignorant and superstitious people, became an object of universal veneration.

On the coasts of *Coromandel* and *Malabar*, the *Brachmans*, or *Bramins*, a peculiar race, who boast of a Divine descent, are the theologians and philosophers of the country. They resemble, in many particulars, the ancient *Therapeutæ* of Egypt. It is probable that the *Bramins* received their institutions from the Egyptians, at the time when Egypt came under the power of Greece, especially as the learned language of this race abounds with Greek words. These Indian priests claim the sole charge of religion, the law of which is contained in a sacred book called the *Veda*, which no laic is permitted to touch.

Among the *Malabars* is a singular sect of *Bramins* called the *Theoretical*, who, laying aside all idolatrous worship, give themselves up entirely to the most rigorous mortification, affect enthusiastic ecstasy and quietism, and hope to

^a Miporelli Obs. in Juvenci Error. de Rebus Sin. p. 146. Kämpfer. Soc. I. c. Univ. Hist. v. xxi. § 356. p. 697. 671. Semler. Pref. Univ. Hist. v. xxiii. Guyon Hist. des Ind. Or. Par. 1744.

^b La Croze Hist. Christ. Ind. vi. Roger. Jan. Nat. ad Gentil. Ziegenbalg. et Soc. Mission. relat. Malab. Burnet Archæol. p. 541. Bayle. Brachm. Fabr. Diss. de Brachm. Syllog. Opusc. p. 333.

resemble the Divine Nature, by putting off all animal passion, and remaining, as long as possible, in a state of perfect inaction both of body and mind. Other sects approach, in different degrees, towards Atheism.

10 The Malabars have some practical knowledge of astronomy; which they appear to have derived from the Egyptians, as they call the signs of the zodiac by the ancient Egyptian names.¹⁰

11 The substance of the Malabaric theology is—that the Essence of Essences, or the Supreme Infinite Substance, wants figure, and cannot be comprehended or moved; that it fills all things; possesses the highest wisdom, truth, knowledge, and purity; is infinitely good and merciful; creates and supports all things; and desires the happiness of man, which will be attained if this Great Being be truly loved and revered; that he cannot be represented by any image, and his attributes alone can be expressed; that he is only to be contemplated in a state of entire abstraction and tranquillity of mind; and cannot be worshipped, but through the medium of inferior divinities; that in creating the world, God separated the active and passive virtues which had hitherto remained absorbed within himself; that the two principles, *Tichtven*, the masculine or active virtue, and *Tscaddi*, the feminine or passive virtue, were the parents of the other subordinate gods; that the souls of brutes and men have the same origin, and after being confined in one body for a time, pass into another; and that, on account of their common origin, it is unlawful for men to kill inferior animals.¹¹

12 These, and many other tenets held by the Malabar Indian, evidently coincide with the ancient Oriental doctrine of emanation. The morality which sprung from this source is deeply tinged with fanaticism and enthusiasm.¹²

¹⁰ Lettres Curieuses et Edifiantes. Rec. x. Rel. Miss. t. i. p. 200, 1022.

¹¹ La Croix, p. 586—611. Roger, p. 249. 283. &c. Relat. Miss. p. 254. 604. 696. &c. Barnet Arch. App.

¹² Barthrouherri Sententie Bramana.

III.

FOHI was one of the first and most celebrated legislators of China; but little is known of the methods by which he civilized his country. An ancient book, called *Yeking*, which is still preserved in China, is ascribed to Fohi; but it is written in hieroglyphics; and no one has been able to give a satisfactory explanation of its contents. The most probable conjecture is that of Leibnitz; that it was intended to teach the art of numeration. Several successive emperors carried forward the work of civilization, particularly by means of moral allegories, fables, and poems. The ancient Chinese wisdom is contained in two distinct collections called *U-kin*, "*The Five Books*," and *Sze-ki*, "*The Four Books*;" which, besides the enigmatical book of Fohi, contain laws, precepts, poems, memoirs of princes, and institutes of rites and ceremonies. These have been commented upon by Confucius, Mencius, and other philosophers.¹³

To this first period of the Chinese philosophy succeeded another, in which it assumed a more artificial form, under *Li, Lao Kün*, or *Lao-Tan*, who flourished six hundred years before Christ. He delivered many useful precepts, of morality, and obtained great authority both among the Chinese and Japanese.

The most celebrated ancient philosopher of China is *Con-fu-cu*, or *Confucius*. He was born of an illustrious family, in the reign of the emperor Lu, about five hundred and fifty years before Christ. At fifteen years of age, he engaged in the study of the ancient learning of his country, and discovered such uncommon wisdom, that he was early advanced to the office of minister of state. Finding all his endeavours to reform the corrupt manners of the court ineffectual, he retired from his public station, and instituted a school, in which he is said to have had several thousand

¹³ Fouquet. Tab. Chron. Sin. Kerth. de Phil. Sin. Leibn. App. ad vers. Germ. Theod. Reimann. Sciagraph. Phil. Sin. Spizelius de Rea liter. Sin. Bullinger Specim. Doct. Vet. Sin. Grap. de Theol. Sin. Niebuhr de Regno Sin. Renaldi. et Minerelli. Observ. ad Eritores Juventuti de Reb. Sin.

disciples, to whom he taught morals, the art of reasoning, and the principles of policy. His life is said to have been, in every respect, worthy of the character of a philosopher. He lived to the age of seventy-three.¹⁴

By his sage counsels, his moral doctrine, and his exemplary conduct, he obtained an immortal name as the reformer of his country. After his death, his name was held in the highest veneration; and his doctrine is still regarded, among the Chinese, as the basis of all moral and political wisdom. His family enjoys by inheritance the honourable title and office of Mandarins; and religious honours are paid to his memory. It is, nevertheless, asserted by the missionaries of the Franciscan and Dominican orders, that Confucius was either wholly unacquainted with, or purposely neglected, the doctrine of a future life, and that in his moral system he paid little regard to religion.¹⁵

Confucius was followed by Men-ko, or *Mencius*, who flourished about three hundred years before Christ, and other philosophers, who wrote books of popular and useful learning. But in the third age after Confucius, the emperor Chi-hoam-ti, or Ching, ordered all philosophical books to be burned, and inflicted death upon many philosophers. A few remains of Chinese wisdom were, however, preserved, and, in the more enlightened dynasty of Han, were brought to light. The destruction of ancient writings under Chi-hoam-ti, renders all Chinese records doubtful, which are of earlier date than two hundred years before Christ.¹⁶

The third period of the ancient Chinese philosophy commences from the time when the doctrines of Fœe, already dispersed through India, passed over to China. This happened about sixty years after the birth of Christ, when the idol Fœe, under which the memory of Xekias is worship-

¹⁴ Couplet. Diss. pr. ad Confuc. S. Bayer. Mus. Sin. t. ii. p. 214. 246. Kämpfer. t. ii. l. iii. c. 6. p. 67.

¹⁵ Spizel. de Rebus. lit. Sin. p. 31. 119. Ep. Leibnitz. v. ii. p. 283. Budaens de Superstit. de Mort. apud Sin. Anal. Phil. p. 287. Hist. Cultus Sines. Col. 1700. Ant. de S. Maria. v. ii. Ep. Leibn. p. 276. Arnold. Prax. Mor. Jesuit. t. 3. 6. 7. Leibnitz. Præf. noviss. Sin. Clavis Sylv. Phil. c. ii. § 7.

¹⁶ Kämpfer. de Memoirs Sin. Lips. 1743. Martini Hist. Sin. Nov. p. 240. Spizel. l. c. p. 40.

ped, was brought among the Chinese. This new superstition was accompanied with doctrines of morality, and with mystical precepts, which inculcated fanatical quietism as the only way to perfection. This fanaticism of Föe overspread the whole country like a deluge, and continues to this day. In the third century, a peculiar sect arose, who gave themselves up entirely to the contemplation of the First Principle of Nature, and who thought, that the nearer they approached to the perfect inaction of inanimate bodies, the more they resembled the Deity.¹⁷

About the tenth century, two philosophers, *Chem-Cu* and *Chimci*, appeared, who introduced metaphysical doctrines nearly resembling those of the Stoics; whence a new sect arose, called *Ju-Kiao*, or the Sect of the Learned.¹⁸

This was the state of the Chinese philosophy when the Jesuit missionaries, French mathematicians, and other Europeans, in the sixteenth century, visited China, and for a long time obtained much attention and respect. The emperor *Kam-hy* encouraged the study of European learning, particularly mathematics, anatomy, medicine, and astronomy. He himself, for several months, received daily instruction in astronomy from the mathematician *Verbiest*. European philosophers had free access to his empire and court. But since his time little indulgence has been shown to Christian travellers.¹⁹

The obscurity of the ancient Chinese books, the dubious credit of the reports brought to Europe by the Jesuit missionaries, and the imperfect acquaintance of Europeans with the Chinese language and writings, render it difficult to ascertain the present state of opinions in China. Their notion of Deity has been a subject of much dispute. Some assert that their *Xang-ti* signifies a Supreme Creator and Ruler of the world; others ascribe to the Chinese a system of nature nearly approaching to Atheism; whilst others maintain their doctrine to be, that there is in the visible heavens a living and powerful nature, like the soul in the body, who has produced other secondary divinities, the rulers of the world, through whom the Supreme Deity

¹⁷ Couplet. l. c. Minorelli, p. 147.

¹⁸ Leibn. ep. ad Remond. Ep. t. ii.

¹⁹ Leibn. noviss. Sinica. Dentrecolles Lettres edifiantes, Rec. 17. 23.

is to be worshipped. Leibnitz is of opinion that the Li of the Chinese is the chaotic soul of the world, and their Taikie the soul of the formed universe; in fine, the Deity of the Stoics.²⁰

The moral and political philosophy of the Chinese, as derived from Confucius, consists of detached maxims and precepts for the conduct of life.

IV.

THE *Japanese* nation appears to be of equal antiquity with the Chinese. The first period of the history of both is equally fabulous. Fohi, the Chinese legislator, is also celebrated by the Japanese as one of the founders of their monarchy. They honour the memory of Confucius. At the time when the doctrine of Xekias was introduced into China, the book Kio, containing the institutes of his philosophy, was brought out of India into Japan by a Xekian priest. The Jesuit Vilela, in 1562, writes from Japan, that the Japanese superstitions are the same with those of the Indian Bramins, and were received from an Indian teacher of the kingdom of Siam; and that their temples are similar to those which he had seen in the island of Ceylon; which confirms what was before observed concerning the origin of Xekias.²¹

If the Japanese superstitions be compared with those of Egypt, it will appear exceedingly probable, that they originated with the Egyptian priests, and passed over from Egypt to India, and thence to China and Japan.

²⁰ Martin. Hist. Sin. l. i. c. 9. p. 16. Wolf. de Sapiencia Sinica. Remondet. Diss. Act. Phil. v. ii. p. 785. Minorell. contr. Juv. p. 126. Kortholt. Præf. Du Halde Hist. Chin.

²¹ Acosta de Rebus a Soc. Jes. in Oriente Gest. Dilling. 1671, 8vo. Epist. Japon. a Maffeo edit. Crasseti Hist. Eccl. Jap. Kemper. Hist. Jap. Bayle, Art. Japan.

THE END.

N. B. The division of this History having occasioned some inequality in the size of the volumes, the Index of the Second Volume is placed at the end of the First.

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